MAHABHARATA

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THE MAHABHARATA

STREE PARVA.

SECTION I.

(Jalapradānika Parva.)

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Bowing down unto Nārāyana, and Nara the foremost of male beings, and unto the goddess Saraswati, must the word JAYA be uttered.

Janamejaya said,—"After Duryodhana had fallen and after all the warriors also had fallen, what, O sage, did king Dhritarāshtra do on receipt of the intelligence?[1] What also did the high-souled Kuru king Yudhishthira the son of Dharma do? What did the three survivors (of the Kuru army, viz.,) Kripa and the others do?[2] I have heard everything about the feats of Açwatthāman. Tell me what happened after that mutual denunciation of curses. Tell me all that Sanjaya said unto the blind old king!"[3]

Vaiçampāyana said,—"After he had lost his century of sons, king Dhritarāshtra, afflicted with grief on that account, cheerless, and looking like a tree shorn of its branches, became overwhelmed with anxiety and lost his power of speech.[4] Possessed of great wisdom, Sanjaya, approaching the monarch, addressed him, saying,—'Why dost thou grieve, O monarch? Grief does not serve anypurpose![5] Eight and ten *Akshauhinis* of combatants, O king, have been slain! The Earth hath become desolate, and is almost empty now![6] Kings of diverse realms, hailing from diverse quarters, united with thy son (for aiding him in battle) and have all laid down their lives![7] Let now the obsequial rites of thy sires and sons and grandsons and kinsmen and friends and preceptors be performed in due order!' "[8]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"Destitute of sons and counsellors and all his friends, king Dhritarāshtra of great energy suddenly fell down on the Earth like a tree uprooted by the wind.[9]

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'Destitute as I am of sons and counsellers and all my friends, I shall, without doubt, have to wander in sorrow over the Earth![10] What need have I now of life itself, reft as I am of kinsmen and friends and resembling as I do a bird shorn of its wings and afflicted with decrepitude?[11] Shorn of kingdom, deprived of kinsmen, and destitute of eyes, I cannot, O thou of great wisdom, shine any longer on Earth like a luminary shorn of its splendours![12] I did not follow the counsels of friends, of Jamadagni's son, of the celestial *Rishi* Nārada, and of the island-born Krishna, while they offered me counsel![13] In the midst of the assembly, Krishna told me what was for my good, saying,—A truce to hostilities, O king! Let thy son take the whole kingdom! (Give but five villages to the Pāndavas)!—Fool that I was, for not following that advice, I am now obliged to repent so poignantly![14] I did not listen to the righteous counsels of Bhishma! Alas, having heard of the slaughter of Duryodhana whose roars were as deep as those of a bull,[15] having heard also of the death of Dusçāsana and the extinction of Karna and the setting of the Drona-sun, my heart does not break into pieces![16] I do not, O Sanjaya, remember any evil act committed by me in former days, whose consequences, fool that I am, I am suffering today![17] Without doubt, I committed great sins in my former lives, for which the supreme Ordainer has set me to endure such a measure of grief![18] This destruction of all my kinsmen, this extermination of all my well-wishers and friends, at this old age, has come upon me through the force of Destiny. What other man is there on Earth who is more afflicted than my wretched self?[19] Since it is so, let the Pāndavas behold me this very day firmly resolved to betake myself to the long way that leads to the regions of Brahman!'"[20]*

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* The sense seems to be that Dhritarāshtra expresses a wish for betaking himself to the woods for preparing himself for death.—T.

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"While king Dhritarāshtra was indulging in such lamentations, Sanjaya addressed him in the following words for dispelling his grief.[21]—'Cast off thy grief, O monarch! Thou hast heard the conclusions of the Vedas and the contents of diverse scriptures and holy writ, from the lips of the old, O king! Thou hast heard those words which the sages said unto Srinjaya while the latter was afflicted with grief on account of the death of his son![22] When thy son, O monarch, caught the pride that is born of youth, thou didst not accept the counsels offered unto thee by thy well-wishers. Desirous of fruit, thou didst not, through covetousness, do what was really for thy benefit![23] Thy own intelligence, like a sharp sword, has wounded thee. Thou didst generally pay court to those that were of wicked behaviour![24] Thy son had Dusçāsana for his counseller, and the wicked-souled son of Rādhā, and the equally wicked Cakuni, and Chritrasena of foolish understanding, and Calya. Thy son (by his own behaviour) made the whole world his enemy.[25] Thy son, O Bhārata, did not obey the words of Bhishma the reverened chief of the Kurus, of Gāndhāri and Vidura, of Drona, O king, of Kripa the son of Caradwat, of the mighty-armed Krishna, of the intelligent Nārada, of many other *Rishis*, and of Vyāsa himself of immeasurable energy![26-27] Though possessed of prowess, thy son was of little intelligence, proud, always desirous of battle, wicked, ungovernable, and discontented.[28] Thou art possessed of learning and intelligence and art always truthful! They that are so righteous and possessed of such intelligence as thou, are never stupified by grief![29] Virtue was regarded by none. Battle was the one word on their lips. For this the Kshatriya order has been exterminated and the fame of thy foes enhanced![30] Thou hadst occupied the position of an umpire, but thou didst not utter one word of salutary advice. Unfitted as thou wert for the task, thou didst not hold the scales evenly.[31] Every person should, at the outset, adopt such a beneficial line of action that he may not have, in the end, to repent for something already done by him.[32] Through affection for thy son, O monarch, thou didst what was agreeable to Duryodhana. Thou art obliged to repent for that now! It behoveth thee, however, not to give way to grief![33] The man whose eyes are directed towards only the honey without being once directed to the fall, meets with destruction through his covetousness for honey. Such a man is obliged to repent even like thee![34] The man who indulges in grief never wins wealth. By grieving one loses the fruits one desires. Grief is again an obstacle to the acquision of objects dear to us. The man who gives way to grief loses even his salvation.[35] The man who shrouds a burning coal within the folds of his attire and is burnt by the fire that is kindled by it, would be pronounced a fool if he grieves for his injuries.[36] Thyself, with thy son, hadst, with your words, fanned the Pārtha-fire, and with your covetousness acting as clarified butter caused that fire to blaze forth, into consuming flames.[37] When that fire thus blazed forth thy sons fell into it like insects. It behoveth thee not, however, to grieve for them now that they have all been burnt in the fire of the enemy's arrows.[38] The tear-stained face, O king, which thou bearest now is not approved by the scriptures or praised by the wise.[39] These tears, like sparks of fire, burn the dead for whom they are shed. Kill thy grief with thy intelligence, and bear thyself up with the strength of thy own self!'[40] Thus was the king comforted by the high-souled Sanjaya. Vidura then, O scorcher of foes, once again addressed the king, displaying great intelligence."[41]

SECTION II.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Listen, O Janamejaya, to the nectar-like words that Vidura said unto the son of Vichitravirya and by which he gladdened that bull among men![1]

"Vidura said,—'Rise, O king! Why art thou stretched on the Earth? Bear thyself up with thy own self! O king, even this is the final end of all living creatures![2] Everything massed together ends in destruction; everything that gets high is sure to fall down. Union is certain to end in separation; life is sure to end in death.[3] The Destroyer, O Bhārata, drags both the hero and the coward. Why then, O bull amongst Kshatriyas, should not Kshatriyas engage in battle?[4] He that does not fight is seen to die. He, again, that fights, is seen to escape with life. When, however, one's time comes, O king, one cannot escape.[5] As regards living creatures, they are non-existent at first. They exist in the period that intervenes. In the end they once more become nonexistent. What matter of grief then is there in this ?[6] The man that indulges in grief succeeds not in meeting with the dead. By indulging in grief, one does not himself die. When the course of the world is such, why dost thou indulge in sorrow ?[7] Death drags all creatures, even the gods. There is none dear or hateful to death, O best of the Kurus ![8] As the wind tears off the tops of all blades of grass, even so, O bull of Bharata's race, Death overmasters all creatures.[9] All creatures are like members of a caravan bound for the same destination. (When death will encounter all) it matters very little whom he meets with first.[10] It behoveth thee not, O king, to grieve for those that have been slain in battle. If the scriptures are any authority, all of them must have obtained the highest end.[11] All of them were versed in the Vedas; all of them had observed vows. Facing the foe, all of them have met with death. What matter of sorrow is there in this ?[12] Invisible they had been (before birth). Having come from that unknown region, they have once more become invisible. They are not thine, nor art thou theirs. What grief then is there in such disappearance ?[13] If slain, one wins heaven. By slaying, fame is won. Both these, with respect to us, are productive of great merit. Battle, therefore, is not bootless.[14] No doubt, Indra will contrive for them regions capable of granting every wish. These, O bull among men, become the guests of Indra.[15] Men cannot, by sacrifices with profuse gifts, by ascetic penances and by learning, go so speedily to heaven as heroes slain in battle.[16] On the bodies of hostile heroes constituting the sacrificial fire, they poured their arrowy libations. Possessed of great energy, they had in return to endure the arrowy libations (poured upon them by their enemies).[17] I tell thee, O king, that for a Kshatriya in this world there is not a better road to heaven than battle ![18] They were all high-souled Kshatriyas; possessed of bravery, they were ornaments of assemblies. They have attained to a high state of blessedness. They are not persons for whom we should grieve![19] Comforting thyself by thy own self, cease to grieve O bull among men! It behoveth thee not to suffer thyself to be overwhelmed with sorrow and to abandon all action![20] There are thousands of mothers and fathers and sons and wives in this world. Whose are they, and whose are we?[21] From day to day thousands of causes spring up for sorrow and thousands of causes for fear. These, however, affect the ignorant but are nothing to him that is wise.[22] There is none dear or hateful to Time, O best of the Kurus! Time is indifferent to none. All are equally dragged by time.[23] Time causeth all creatures to grow, and it is Time that destroyeth everything. When all else is asleep, Time is awake. Time is irresistible.[24] Youth, beauty, life, possessions, health, and the companionship of friends, all are unstable. He that is wise will never covet any of these.[25] It behoveth thee not to grieve for what is universal. A person may, by indulging in grief, himself perish, but grief itself, by being indulged in, never becomes light.[26] If thou feelest thy grief to be heavy, it should be counteracted by not indulging in it. Even this is the medicine for grief, viz., that one should not indulge in it.[27] By dwelling on it, one cannot lessen it. On the other hand, it grows with indulgence. Upon the advent of evil or upon the bereavement of something that is dear, only they that are of little intelligence suffer their minds to be afflicted with grief.[28] This is neither Profit, nor Religion, nor Happiness, on which thy heart is dwelling.[29] The indulgence of grief is the certain means of one's losing one's objects. Through it, one falls away from the three great ends of life (viz., religion, profit, and pleasure). They that are destitute of contentment, are stupified on the accession of vicissitudes dependent up on the possession of wealth. They, however, that are wise, are, on the other hand, unaffected by such vicissitudes. One should kill mental grief by wisdom, just as physical grief should be killed by medicine. Wisdom hath this power. They, however, that are foolish, can never abtain transquillity of soul.[30-31] The acts of a former life closely follow a man, insomuch that they lie by him when he lies down, stay by him when he stays, and run with him when he runs.[32] In those conditions of life in which one acts well or ill, one enjoys or suffers the fruit thereof in similar conditons.[33] In those forms (of physical organisation) in which one performs particular acts, one enjoys or suffers the fruits thereof in similar forms.[34] One's own self is one's own friend, as, indeed, one's own self is one's own enemy. One's own self is the witness of one's acts, good and evil.[35] From good acts springs a state of happiness, from sinful deeds springs woe. One always obtains the fruit of one's acts. One never enjoys or suffers weal or woe that is not the fruit of one's own acts.[36] Intelligent persons like thee, O king, never sink in sinful enormities that are disapproved by knowledge and that strike at the very root (of virtue and happiness).' "[37]

SECTION III.

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'O thou of great wisdom, my grief has been dispelled by thy excellent words! I desire, however, to again hear thee speak.[1] How, indeed, do those that are wise free themselves from mental grief born of the advent of evils and the bereavement of objects that are dear?'[2]

"Vidura said,—'He that is wise obtains tranquillity by subduing both grief and joy through means by which one may escape from grief and joy.[3] All those things about which we are anxious, O bull among men, is ephemeral. The world is like a plantain tree, without enduring strength.[4] Since the wise and the foolish, the rich and the poor, all, divested of their anxieties, sleep on the crematorium, with bodies reft of flesh and full of bare bones and shrivelled sinews,[5] whom amongst them will the survivors look upon as possessed of distinguishing marks by which the attributes of birth and beauty may be ascertained? (When all are equal in death) why sould human beings, whose understandings are always decieved (by the things of this world) covet one another's rank and position?[6] The learned say that the bodies of men are like houses. In time these are destroyed. There is one being, however, that is eternal.[7] As a person, casting off one attire, whether old or new, wears another, even such is the case with the bodies of all embodied beings.[8] O son of Vichitravirya, creatures obtain weal or woe as the fruit of their own acts.[9] Through their acts they obtain heaven, O Bhārata, or bliss, or woe. Whether able or unable, they have to bear their burdens which are the result of their own acts.[10] As amongst earthen pots some break while still on the potter's wheel, some while partially shaped, some as soon as brought into shape, some after removal from the wheel, some while in course of being removed, some after removal, some while wet, some while dry, some while being burnt, some while being removed from the kiln, some after removal therefrom, and some while being used, even such is the case with the bodies of embodied creatures.[11-13] Some are destroyed while yet in the womb, some after coming out of the womb, some on the day after, some on the expiration of a fortnight or of a month, some on the expiration of a year or of two years, some in youth, some in middle age, and some when old.[14-15] Creatures are born or destroyed according to their acts in previous lives. When such is the course of the world, why do you then indulge in grief?[16] As men, while swimming in sport on the water, sometimes dive and sometimes emerge, O king, even so creatures sink and emerge in life's stream. They that are of little wisdom suffer or meet with destruction as the result of their own acts.[17-18] They, however, that are wise, observant of virtue, and desirous of doing good unto all living creatures, they, acquainted with the real nature of the appearance of creatures in this world, attain at last to the highest end.'"[19]

SECTION IV.

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'O foremost of speakers, how may the wilderness of this world be known? I desire to hear this! Asked by me, tell me this!'[1]

"Vidura said,—'I will describe to thee all the acts of creatures from their first conception. At the outset it lives in the admixture of blood and the vital fluid. Then it grows little by little. Then on the expiry of the fifth month it assumes shape.[2] It next becomes a fœtus with all its limbs completed, and lives in a very impure place, covered with flesh and blood.[3] Then, through the action of the wind, its lower limbs are turned upwards and the head comes downwards. Arriving in this posture at the mouth of the uterus, it suffers manifold woes.[4] In consequence of the contractions of the uterus, the creature then comes out of it, endued with the results of all his previous acts. He then encounters in this world other evils that rush towards him. Calamities proceed towards him like dogs at the scent of meat.[5] Next diverse diseases approach him while he is enchained by his previous acts.[6] Bound by the chains of the senses and women and wealth and other sweet things of life, diverse evil practices also approach him then, O king![7] Seized by these, he never obtains happiness. At that season he succeeds not in obtaining the fruit of his acts, right or wrong. They, however, that set their hearts on reflection, succeed in protecting their souls.[8] The person governed by his senses does not know that death has come at his door. At last, dragged by the messengers of the Destroyer, he meets with destruction at the appointed time.[9] Agitated by his senses, whatever of good and evil he has done has been done at the outset. Having enjoyed or suffered the fruits of these, he once more becomes indifferent to his acts of self-slaugter..[10] Alas, the world is deceived, and covetousness brings it under its dominion! Deprived of understanding by covetousness, wrath, and fear, one knows not one's own self![11] Filled with joy at one's own respectability of birth, one is seen to traduse those that are not high-born! Swelled also with pride of wealth, one is seen to contemt the poor![12] One regards others to be ignorant fools, but seldom takes a survey of one's own self. One attributes faults to others but never desires to punish one's own self.[13] Since the wise and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the high-born and the low-born, the honored and the dishonored,[14] all go to the place of the dead and sleep there freed from every anxiety, with bodies divested of flesh and full only of bones united by dried up tendons,[15] whom amongst them would the survivors look upon as distinguished above the others and by what signs would they ascertain the attributes of birth and beauty?[16] When all, stretched after the same fashion, sleep on the bare ground, why then should men, taking leave of their senses, desire to deceive one another?[17] He that, looking at this saying (in the scriptures) with his own eyes or hearing it from others, practiseth virtue in this unstable world of life and adhereth to it from early age, attaineth to the highest end.[18] Learning all this, he that adhereth to Truth, O king, succeedeth in passing over all paths.' "*[19]

SECTION V.

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'Tell me in detail everything about the ways of that intelligence by which this wilderness of duties may be safely covered![1]

"Vidura said,—'Having bowed down to the Self-create, I will obey thy behest by telling thee how the great sages speak of the wilderness of life.[2] A certain Brāhmana, living in the great world, found himself on one occasion in a large inaccessible forest teeming with beasts of prey.[3] It abounded on every side with lions and tigers and other animals looking like elephants, all of which were engaged in roaring aloud. Such was the aspect of that forest that Yama himself would take fright at it.[4] Beholding the forest, the heart of the Brāhmana became exceedingly agitated. His hair stood on end, and other signs of fear manifested themselves, O scorcher of foes![5] Entering it, he began to run hither and thither, casting his eyes on every point of the compass for finding out somebody whose shelter he might seek.[6] Wishing to avoid those terrible creatures, he ran in fright. He could not succeed, however, in distancing them or freeing himself from their presence.[7] He then saw that that terrible forest was surrounded with a net, and that a frightful woman stood there, stretching her arms.[8] That large forest was also encompassed by many five-headed snakes of dreadful forms, tall as cliffs and touching the very heavens.[9] Within it was a pit whose mouth was covered with many hard and unyielding creepers and herbs.[10] The Brāhmana, in course of his wanderings, fell into that invisible pit. He became entangled in those clusters of creepers that were interwoven with one another,[11] like the large fruit of a jack tree hanging by its stalk. He continued to hang there, feet upwards and head downwards.[12] While in that posture, diverse other calamities overtook him. He beheld a large and mighty snake within the pit. He also saw a gigantic elephant near its mouth.[13] That elephant, dark in complexion, had six faces and twelve feet. And the animal gradually approached that pit covered with creepers and trees.[14] About the twigs of the tree (that stood at the mouth of the pit) roved many bees of frightful forms, employed from before in drinking the honey gathered in their comb about which they swarmed in large numbers.[15] Repeatedly they desired, O bull of Bharata's race, to taste that honey which though sweet to all creatures could however, attract children only.[16] The honey (collected in the comb) fell in many jets below. The person who was hanging in the pit continually drank those jets.[17] Employed, in such a distressful situation, in drinking that honey, his thirst, however, could not be appeased. Unsatiated with repeated draughts, the person desired for more.[18] Even then, O king, he did not become indifferent to life. Even there, the man continued to hope for existence. A number of black and white rats were eating away the roots of that tree.[19] There was fear from the beasts of prey, from that fierce woman on the outskirts of that forest, from that snake at the bottom of the well, from that elephant near its top,[20] from the fall of the tree through the action of the rats, and lastly from those bees flying about for tasting the honey.[21] In that plight he continued to dwell, deprived of his senses, in that wilderness, never losing at any time the hope of prolonging his life.' "[22]

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* A figurative expression, meaning, obtains all kinds of blessedness.—T.

SECTION VI.

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'Alas, great was the distress of that person and very painful his mode of life! Tell me, O first of speakers, whence was his attachment to life and whence his happiness?[1] Where is that region, so unfavourable to the practice of virtue, in which that person resides? Oh, tell me how will that man be freed from all those great terrors?[2] Tell me all this! We shall then exert properly for him. My compassion has been greatly moved by the difficulties that lie in the way of his rescue!'[3]

"Vidura said,—'They that are conversant, O monarch, with the religion of *Moksha* cite this as a simile. Understanding this properly, a person may attain to bliss in the regions hereafter.[4] That which is described as the wilderness is the great world. The inaccessible forest within it is the limited sphere of one's own life.[5] Those that have been mentioned as beasts of prey are the diseases (to which we are subject). That woman of gigantic proportions residing in the forest,[6] is identified by the wise with Decrepitude which destroys complexion and beauty. That which has been spoken of as the pit is the body or physical frame of embodied creatures.[7] The huge snake dwelling in the bottom of that pit is Time, the destroyer of all embodied creatures. It is, indeed, the universal destroyer.[8] The cluster of creepers growing in that pit and attached to whose spreading stems the man hangeth down is the desire for life which is cherished by every creature.[9] The six-faced elephant, O king, which proceeds towards the tree standing at the mouth of the pit is spoken of as the year. Its six faces are the seasons and its twelve feet are the twelve months.[10] The rats and the snakes that are cutting off the tree are said to be days and nights that are continually lessening the periods of life of all creatures. Those that have been described as bees are our desires.[11] The numerous jets that are dropping honey are the pleasures derived from the gratification of our desires and to which men are seen to be strongly addicted.[12] The wise know life's course to be even such. Through that knowledge they succeed in tearing off its bonds.'"[13]

SECTION VII.

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'Excellent is this parable that thou hast recited! Indeed, thou art acquainted with Truth! Having listened to thy nectar-like speech, I desire to hear thee more!'[1]

"Vidura said,—'Listen to me, O king, I shall once more discourse in detail on those means an acquaintance with which enables the wise to free themselves from the ties of the world![2] As a person, O king, who has to travel a long way, is sometimes obliged to halt when fatigued with toil,[3] even so, O Bhārata, they that are of little intelligence, travelling along the extended way of life, have to make frequent halts in the shape of repeated births in the womb. They, however, that are wise, are freed from that obligation.[4] Men conversant with the scriptures, for this, describe life's course as a long way. The wise also call life's round with all its difficulties as a forest.[5] Creatures, O bull of Bharata's race, whether mobile or immobile, have to repeatedly return to the world. The wise alone escape.[6] The diseases, mental and physical, to which mortals are subject, whether visible or invisible, are spoken of as beasts of prey by the wise.[7] Men are always afflicted and impeded by them, O Bhārata! Then again, those fierce beasts of prey, represented by their own acts in life, never cause any anxiety to them that are of little intelligence.[8] If any person, O monarch, somehow escapes from diseases, Decrepitude, that destroyer of beauty, overwhelms him afterwards.[9] Plunged in a slough by the objects of the different senses, viz., sound and form and taste and touch and scent, man remains there without anything to rescue him thence.[10] Meanwhile, the years, the seasons, the months, the fortnights, the days, and the nights, coming one after another, gradually despoil him of beauty and lessen the period allotted to him.[11] These all are messengers of death. They, however, that are of little understanding, know them not to be such. The wise say that all creatures are governed by the Ordainer through their acts.[12] The body of a creature is called the car. The living principle is the driver of (that car). The senses are said to be the steeds. Our acts and the understanding are the traces.[13] He who followeth after those running steeds, has to come repeatedly to this world in a round of re-births.[14] He, however, who, being self-restrained, restrains them by his understanding, hath not to come back.[15] They, however, that are not stupified while wandering in this wheel of life that is revolving like a real wheel, do not in reality wander in a round of re-births.[16] He that is wise should certainly take care to prevent the obligation of re-birth. One should not be indifferent to this, for indifference may subject us to it repeatedly.[17] The man, O king, who has restrained his senses and subdued wrath and covetousness, who is contented, and truthful in speech, succeeds in obtaining peace.[18] This body is called the car of Yama. They that are of little intelligence are stupified by it. Such a person, O king, would obtain that which thou hast obtained.[19] The loss of kingdom, of friends, and of children, O Bhārata, and such as these, overtake him who is still under the influence of desire.[20] He that is wise should apply the medicine of intelligence to all great griefs. Indeed, obtaining the medicine of wisdom, which is truly very efficacious and is almost unattainable, the man of restrained soul would kill that serious disease called sorrow.[21] Neither prowess, nor wealth, nor friends, nor well-wishers, can cure a man of his grief so effectually as the self-restrained soul. Therefore, observant of the great duty of abstention from all injuries, or friendship for all creatures, be of pious behaviour, O Bhārata ![22] Self-restraint, renunciation, and heedfulness are the three steeds of Brahman. He who rides on the car of his soul, unto which are yoked these steeds with the aid of traces furnished by good conduct, and drives it, casting off all fear of death, proceedeth, O king, to the regions of *Brahma*.[23] That person, O monarch, who gives unto all creatures an assurance of his harmlessness, goes to the highest of regions, *viz.*, the blessed one of Vishnu.[24] The fruit that one obtains by giving an assurance unto all creatures of his harmlessness cannot be obtained by a thousand sacrifices or by daily fasts.[25] Amongst all things there is certainly nothing dearer than self, Death is certainly disliked by all creatures, O Bhārata! Therefore, compassion should certainly be shown unto all.[26] Endued with diverse kinds of errors, entangled by the net of their own intelligence, they that are wicked and are of good vision, wander repeatedly on the Earth. They, however, that are wise and endued with subtile sight, attain to a union with *Brahma.*' "[27]

SECTION VIII.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Even after hearing the words of Vidura, the chief of the Kurus, afflicted with grief on account of the death of his sons, fell down senseless on the Earth.[1] Beholding him fall down in that state, his friends as also the island-born Vyāsa, and Vidura, and Sanjaya, and other well-wishers, and the attendants who used to wait at the gates and who enjoyed his confidence,[2] sprinkled cool water over his body, and fanned him with palm leaves, and gently rubbed him with their hands. For a long while they comforted the king while in that condition.[3] The monarch, recovering his senses after a long time, wept for a long while, overwhelmed with grief on account of the death of his sons.[4] He said,—'Fie on the state of humanity! Fie on the human body! The woes that are suffered in this life frequently arise from the very state of humanity![5] Alas, O lord, great is the grief, like poison or fire, that one suffers at the loss of sons, of wealth, of kinsmen, and relatives![6] That grief causes the limbs to burn, and our wisdom to be destroyed. Overwhelmed with that grief, a person regards death to be preferable.[7] This calamity that has overtaken me through ill-luck is even like that. It will not, I see, end except with life itself! O best of regenerate ones, I shall, therefore, put an end to my life this very day!'[8]—Having said these words unto his high-souled sire, that foremost of all persons conversant with *Brahma*, Dhritarāshtra, overwhelmed with grief, became stupified. The king, O monarch, reflecting on his woes, became speechless.[9] Hearing these words of his, the puissant Vyāsa thus spoke unto his son afflicted with grief on account of the death of his children.[10]

"Vyāsa said,—'O mighty-armed Dhritarāshtra, listen to what I say! Thou art possessed of learning, thou hast great intelligence, and thou, O puissant one, art skilled in understanding duties![11] Nothing of that which should be known is unknown to thee, O scorcher of foes! Without doubt, thou knowest the instability of all things doomed to death![12] When the world of life is unstable, when this world itself is not eternal, when life is sure to end in death, why then, O Bhārata, dost thou grieve?[13] Before thy very eyes, O king, the concatenation of facts brought about by Time, making thy son the cause, produced this hostility![14] This destruction of the Kurus, O king, was inevitable. Why then dost thou grieve for those heroes that have attained to the highest end?[15] O thou of mighty-arms, the high-souled Vidura knew everything. With all his might he had endeavoured, O king, to bring about peace![16] It is my opinion that the course marked out by Destiny cannot be controlled by any one, even if one struggles for eternity![17] The course that was settled by the gods was heard directly by me. I will recite it to thee, so that tranquillty of mind may be thine![18] Once before, without any fatigue, I repaired very quickly to the court of Indra. There I beheld all the denizens of heaven assembled together.[19] There were, O sinless one, all the celestial *Rishis* also, headed by Nārada. There, O monarch, I saw also the Earth (in her embodied form).[20] The latter had repaired to the gods for the accomplishment of a particular mission. Approaching the gods, she said,[21]—That which ye all should do for me hath, ye blessed ones, been already promised by you while you were in Brahman's abode! Let that be accomplished soon![22]—Hearing these words of hers, Vishnu, the adored of all the worlds, smilingly addressed her in the midst of the celestial conclave, saying,[23]—The eldest of the hundred sons of Dhritarāshtra, he, *viz.*, who is known by the name of Duryodhana, will accomplish thy business! Through that king, thy purpose will be achieved![24] For his sake, many kings will assemble together on the field of Kuru. Capable of smiting, they will cause one another to be slain through the instrumentality of hard weapons.[25] It is evident, O goddess, that thy burthen will then be lightened in battle! Go quickly to thy own place and continue to bear the weight of creatures, O beauteous one![26]—From this thou wilt understand, O king, that thy son Duryodhana, born in Gāndhāri's womb, was a portion of Kali, sprung for the object of causing a universal slaughter![27] He was vindictive, restless, wrathful, and difficult of being gratified. Through the influence of Destiny his brothers also became like him.[28] Cakuni became his maternal uncle and Karna his great friend. Many other kings were born on Earth for aiding in the work of destruction.[29] As the king is, so do his subjects become. If the king becomes righteous, even unrighteousness (in his dominions) assumes the shape of righteousness.[30] Servants, without doubt, are affected by the merits and defects of their masters. Those sons of thine, O king, having obtained a bad king, have all been destroyed.[31] Conversant with truth, Nārada knew all this. Thy sons, through their own faults, have been destroyed, O king! Do not grieve for them, O monarch! There is no cause for grief![32] The Pāndavas have not, O Bhārata, the least fault in what has happened! Thy sons were all of wicked souls. It is they that caused this destruction on Earth.[33] Blessed be thou, Nārada had truly informed Yudhishthira of all this in his court on the occasion of the *Rājasuya* sacrifice, saying,[34]—The Pāndavas and the Kauravas, encountering each other, will meet with destruction. Do that, O son of Kunti, which thou shouldst![35]—Hearing these words of Nārada, the Pāndavas became filled with grief. I have thus told thee that which is an eternal secret of the gods![36] This will destroy thy grief and restore to thee a love of thy life-breaths, and cause thee to cherish affection for the Pāndavas, for all that has happened has been due to what had been ordained by the gods.[37] O thou of mighty-arms, I had learnt all this sometime before. I also spoke of it to king Yudhishthira the just on the occasion of his foremost of sacrifices, *viz.*, the *Rājasuya!*[38] When I secretly informed him of all this, Dharma's son endeavoured his best for preserving peace with the Kauravas. That, however, which is ordained by the gods proved too powerful (to be frustrated by him).[39] The fiat, O king, of the Destroyer, is incapable of being baffled any how by mobile and immobile creatures.[40] Thou art devoted to virtue and possessed of superior intelligence, O Bhārata! Thou knowest also that which is the way and that which is not the way of all creatures![41] If king Yudhishthira learns that thou art burning with grief and losing thy senses frequently, he will cast off his very life-breaths![42] He is always compassionate and possessed of wisdom. His kindness extends even to all the inferior creatures. How is it possible, O king, that he will not show compassion to thee, O monarch?[43] At my command, and knowing that that which is ordained is inevitable, as also from kindness to the Pāndavas, continue to bear thy life, O Bhārata![44] If thou livest thus, thy fame will spread in the world. Thou shalt then be able to acquire a knowledge of all duties and find many years for obtaining ascetic merit.[45] This grief for the death of thy sons that has arisen in thy heart, like a blazing fire, should always be extinguished, O king, by the water of wisdom!' "[46]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"Hearing these words of Vyāsa of immeasurable energy and reflecting upon them for a little while, Dhritarāshtra said,[47]—'O best of regenerate ones, I am exceedingly afflicted by a heavy load of grief! My senses are repeatedly forsaking me and I am unable to bear up my own self.[48] Hearing, however, these words of thine about what had been ordained by the gods, I shall not think of casting off my life-breaths and shall live and act without indulging in grief!'[49] Hearing these words of Dhritarāshtra, O monarch, Satyavati's son Vyāsa, disappeared then and there."[50]

SECTION IX.

Janamejaya said,—"After the holy Vyāsa had departed, what, O regenerate sage, did king Dhritarāshtra do? It behoveth thee to tell me this![1] What also did the Kuru king, the high-souled son of Dharma, do! And how were those three, viz., Kripa and others, do?[2] I have heard of the feats of Açwatthāman and the mutual denouncement of curses. Tell me what happened next and what Sanjaya next said (unto the old king."[3]

Vaiçampāyana said,—"After Duryodhana had been slain and all the troops slaughtered, Sanjaya, deprived of his spiritual sight, came back to Dhritarāshtra.[4]

"Sanjaya said,—'The kings of diverse peoples, that came from diverse realms, have all, O king, gone to the regions of the dead, along with thy sons![5] Thy son, O king, who had constantly been implored (for peace) but who always wished to terminate his hostility (with the Pāndavas by slaughtering them) has caused the Earth to be exterminated.[6] Do thou, O king, cause the obsequial rites of thy sons and grandsons and sires to be performed according to due order!' "[7]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"Hearing these terrible words of Sanjaya, the king fell down on the Earth and lay motionless like one deprived of life.[8] Approaching the monarch who was lying prostrate on the Earth, Vidura, conversant with every duty, said these words:[9]—'Rise, O king, why dost thou lie down thus? Do not grieve, O bull of Bharata's race! Even this, O lord of Earth, is the final end of all creatures![10] At first creatures are non-existent. In the interin, O Bhārata, they become existent. At the end, they once more become non-existent. What cause of sorrow is there in all this?[11] By indulging in grief, one cannot get back the dead. By indulging in grief, one cannot die himself. When such is the course of the world, why dost thou indulge in grief?[12] One may die without having engaged in battle. One also escapes with life after having engaged in battle. When one's Time comes, O king, one cannot escape![13] Time drags all kinds of creatures. There is none dear or hateful to Time, O best of the Kurus![14] As the wind tears off the ends of all blades of grass, even so all creatures, O bull of Bharata's race, are brought by Time under its influence.[15] All creatures are like members of the same caravan bound for the same destination. What cause of sorrow is there if Time meets with one a little earlier than with another?[16] Those again, O king, that have fallen in battle and for whom thou grievest, are not really objects of thy grief, since all those illustrious ones have gone to heaven!'[17] By sacrifices with profuse presents, by ascetic austerities, and by knowledge, people cannot so easily repair to heaven as heroes by courage in battle.[18] All those heroes were conversant with the Vedas; all of them were observant of vows; all of them have perished, facing the foe in battle. What cause of sorrow then is there?'[19] They poured their arrowy libations upon the bodies of their brave foes as upon a fire. Foremost of men, they bore in return the arrowy libations poured upon themselves.[20] I tell thee, O king, that there is no better way to heaven for a Kshatriya than through battle!'[21] All of them were high-souled Kshatriyas, all of them were heroes and ornaments of assemblies. They have attained to a high state of blessedness. One should not grieve for them.[22] Do thou comfort thy own self. Do not grieve, O bull among men! It behoveth thee not to suffer thyself to be overwhelmed with sorrow and abandon all action!' "[23]

SECTION X.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Hearing these words of Vidura, that bull of Bharata's race (viz., Dhritarāshtra,) ordered his car to be yoked. The king once more said,—'Bring Gāndhāri hither without delay, and all the Bharata ladies! Bring hither Kunti also, as well as all the other ladies with her!'[2] Having said these words unto Vidura conversant with every duty, Dhritarāshtra of righteous soul, deprived of his senses by sorrow, ascended on his car.[3] Then Gāndhāri, afflicted with grief on account of the death of his sons, accompanied by Kunti and the other ladies of the royal household, came, at the command of her lord, to that spot where the latter was waiting for her.[4] Afflicted with great grief, they came together to the king. As they met, they accosted each other and uttered loud wails of woe.[5] Then Vidura, who had become more afflicted than those ladies, began to comfort them. Placing those weeping fair ones on the cars that stood ready for them, he set out (with them) from the city.[6] At that time a loud wail of woe arose from every Kuru house. The whole city, including the very children, became exceedingly afflicted with grief.[7] Those ladies that had

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not before this been seen by the very gods were now, helpless as they were for the loss of their lords, seen by the common people.[8] With their beautiful tresses all dishevelled, and their ornaments cast off, those ladies, each attired in a single piece of raiment, proceeded most wofully.[9] Indeed, they issued from their houses resembling white mountains, like a dappled herd of deer from their mountain caves after the fall of their leader.[10] Those fair ladies, in successive bevies, O king, came out, filled with sorrow, and ran hither and thither like a herd of fillies on a circus yard.[11] Seizing each other's hands, they uttered loud wails after their sons and brothers and sires. They seemed to exhibit the scene that takes place on the occasion of the universal destruction at the end of the *Yuga.*[12] Weeping and crying and running hither and thither, and deprived of their senses by grief, they knew not what to do.[13] Those ladies who formerly felt the blush of modesty in the presence of even companions of their own sex, now felt no blush of shame, though scantily clad, in appearing before their mothers-in-law.[14] Formerly they used to comfort each other while afflicted with even slight causes of woe. Stupified by grief, they now, O king, refrained from even casting their eyes upon each other.[15] Surrounded by those thousands of wailing ladies, the king cheerlessly issued out of the city and proceeded with speed towards the field of battle.[16] Artizans and traders and Vaiçyas and all kinds of mechanics, issuing out of the city, followed in the wake of the king.[17] As those ladies, afflicted by the wholesale destruction that had overtaken the Kurus, cried in sorrow, a loud wail arose from among them that seemed to pierce all the worlds.[18] All creatures that heard that wail thought that the hour of universal destruction had come when all things would be consumed by the fire that arises at the end of the *Yuga.*[19] The citizens also (of Hastināpura), devoted to the house of Kuru, with hearts filled with anxiety at the destruction that had overtaken their rulers, set up, O king,—a wail that was as loud as that uttered by those ladies."[20]

SECTION XI.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Dhritarāshtra had not proceeded for more than two miles when he met with those three great car-warriors, viz., Caradwat's son Kripa, Drona's son (Açwatthāman), and Kritavarman.[1] As soon as the latter obtained a sight of the blind monarch possessed of great power, the three heroes sighed in grief and with voices choked in tears weepingly addressed him, saying,[2]—'Thy royal son, O king, having achieved the most difficult feats, has, with all his followers, gone to the region of Indra![3] We are the only three car-warriors of Duryodhana's army that have escaped with life. All the others O bull of Bharata's race, have perished.'[4] Having said these words unto the king, Caradwat's son Kripa, addressing the grief-afflicted Gāndhāri, said these words unto her,[5]—'Thy sons have fallen while engaged in achieving feats worthy of heroes, *i. e.*, while fearlessly fighting in battle and striking down large numbers of foes![6] Without doubt, having obtained those bright worlds that are attainable only by the use of weapons, they are sporting there like celestials, having assumed resplendent forms.[7] Amongst those heroes there was no one that turned back from battle. Every one of them has fallen at the end or edge of weapons. None of them joined his hands, begging for quarter.[8] Death in battle at the end or edge of weapons has been said by the ancients to be the highest end that a Kshatriya can obtain. It behoveth thee not, therefore, to grieve for any of them![9] Their foes, O queen, viz., the Pāndavas, too, have not been more fortunate! Listen, what we, headed by Açwatthāman, have done unto them.[10] Learning that thy son had been slain unrighteously by Bhima, we slaughtered the Pāndavas after entering their camp buried in sleep.[11] All the Pānchālas have been slain. Indeed, all the sons of Drupada, as also all the sons of Draupadi, have been slaughtered.[12] Having caused this carnage of the sons of our foes, we are flying away since we three are incapable of standing in battle with them.[13] Our foes, the Pāndavas, are all heroes and mighty bowmen. They will soon come up with us, filled with rage, for taking vengeance on us.[14] Learning the slaughter of their sons, those bulls among men, infuriate with rage,—those heroes,—O illustrious lady, will speedily pursue our track.[15] Having caused a carnage (in their sleeping camp) we dare not stay. Grant us permission, O queen! It behoveth thee not to set thy heart on sorrow![16] Grant us thy permission also, O king! Summon all thy fortitude. Do thou also observe the duties of a Kshatriya in their highest form!'[17] Having said these words unto the king, and circumambulating him, Kripa and Kritavarman and Drona's son, O Bhārata,[18] without being able to withdraw their eyes from king Dhritarāshtra possessed of great wisdom, urged their steeds towards the banks of the Ganges.[19] Moving away from that spot, O king, those great car-warriors, with hearts plunged in anxiety, took one another's leave and separated from one another.[20] Caradwat's son Kripa went to Hastināpura; Hridikā's son repaired to his own kingdom; while the son of Drona set out for the asylum of Vyāsa.[21] Even thus those heroes, who had offended the high-souled sons of Pāndu, respectively proceeded to the places they selected, afflicted with fear and casting their eyes on one another.[22] Having met the king thus, those brave chastisers of foes, before the sun rose, went away, O monarch, to the places they chose.[23] It was after this, O king, that the sons of Pāndu, those great car-warriors, encountered the son of Drona, and putting forth their prowess, vanquished him, O monarch, (in the way already related)."[24]

SECTION XII.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"After all the warriors had been slaughtered, king Yudhishthira the just heard that his uncle Dhritarāshtra had set out from the city called after the elephant.[1] Afflicted with grief on account of the death of his sons, Yudhishthira, O king, accompanied by his brothers, set out for meeting his uncle filled with sorrow and overwhelmed with grief for the slaughter of his (hundred) sons.[2] The son of Kunti was followed by the high-souled and heroic Krishna of Daçārha's race, and by Yuyudhāna, as also by Yuyutsu.[3]

The princess Draupadi also, burning with grief, and accompanied by those Pānchāla ladies that were with her, sorrowfully followed her lord.[4] Yudhishthira beheld near the banks of the Ganges, O king, the crowd of Bharata ladies afflicted with woe and crying like a flight of she-spreys.[5] The king was soon surrounded by those thousands of ladies who with arms raised aloft in grief, were indulging in loud lamentations and giving expression to all kinds of words, agreeable and disagreeable.[6]—'Where, indeed, is that righteousness of the king, where his truth and compassion, since he has slain sires and brothers and preceptors and sons and friends?[7] How, O mighty-armed one, hath thy heart become tranquil after causing Drona, and thy grandsire Bhishma, and Jayadratha, to be slaughtered?[8] What need hast thou of sovereignty, after having seen thy sires and brothers, O Bhārata, and the irresistible Abhimanyu and the sons of Draupadi, thus slaughtered?'[9]—Passing over those ladies crying like a flight of she-ospreys, the mighty-armed king Yudhishthira the just saluted the feet of his eldest uncle.[10] Having saluted their sire according to custom, those slayers of foes, **viz.**, the Pāndavas, announced themselves to him, each uttering his own name.[11] Dhritarāshtra, exceedingly afflicted with grief on account the slaughter of his sons, then reluctantly embraced the eldest son of Pāndu, who was the cause of that slaughter.[12] Having embraced Yudhishthira the just and spoken a few words of comfort to him, O Bhārata, the wicked-souled Dhritarāshtra sought for Bhima, like a blazing fire ready to burn everythig that would approach it.[13] Indeed, the fire of his wrath, fanned by the wind of his grief, seemed then to be ready to consume the Bhima-forest.[14] Ascertaining the evil intentions cherished by him towards Bhima, Krishna, dragging away the real Bhima, presented an iron statue of the second son of Pāndu to the old king.[15] Possessed of great intelligence, Krishna had, at the very outset, understood the intentions of Dhritarāshtra, and had, therefore, kept such a contrivance ready for baffling them.[16] Seizing with his two arms that iron Bhima, king Dhritarāshtra, possessed of great strength, broke it into pieces, thinking it to be Bhima himself in flesh and blood.[17] Endued with might equal to that of ten thousand elephants, the king reduced that statue into fragments. His own breast, however, became considerably bruised and he began to vomit blood.[18] Covered with blood, the king fell down on the ground like a *Pārijāta* tree topped with its flowery burden.[19] His learned charioteer Sanjaya the son of Gavalgana raised the monarch and soothing and comforting him, said,—'Do not act so.'[20] The king then, having cast off his wrath and returned to his normal disposition, became filled with grief and began to weep aloud, saying, —'Alas, Oh Bhima, Alas, Oh Bhima!'[21]—Understanding that he was no longer under the influence of wrath, and that he was truly sorry for having (as he believed) killed Bhima, Vāsudeva, that foremost of men, said these words,[22]—'Do not grieve, O Dhritarāshtra, for thou hast not slain Bhimasena! That is an iron statue, O king, which has been broken by thee![23] Understanding that thou wert filled with rage, O bull of Bharata's race, I dragged the son of Kunti away from within the jaws of Death![24] O tiger among kings, there is none equal to thee in strength of body! What man is there, O mighty-armed one, that would endure the pressure of thy arms?[25] Indeed, as no one can escape with life from an encounter with the Destroyer himself, even so nobody can come out safe from within thy embrace![26] It was for this that yonder iron statue of Bhima, which had been caused to be made by thy son, had been kept ready for thee![27] Through grief for the death of thy sons, thy mind has fallen off from righteousness! It is for this, O great king, that thou seekest to slay Bhimasena![28] The slaughter of Bhima, however, O king, would do thee no good. Thy sons, O monarch, would not be revived by it![29] Therefore, do thou aprove of what has been done by us with a view to secure peace, and do not set thy heart on grief!' "[30]

SECTION XIII.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Certain maid-servants then came to the king for washing him. After he had been duly washed, the slayer of Madhu again addressed him, saying,[1]—'Thou hast, O king, read the Vedas and diverse scriptures! Thou hast heard all old histories, and everything about the duties of kings![2] Thou art learned, possessed of great wisdom, and competent to strength and weakness. Why then dost thou cherish such wrath when all that has overtaken thee is the result of thy own fault?[3] I spoke to thee before the battle. Both Bhishma and Drona, O Bhārata, did the same, as also Vidura and Sanjaya. Thou didst not, however, then follow our advice.[4] Indeed, though exhorted by us, thou didst not yet act according to the counsels we offered, knowing that the Pāndavas were superior to thee and thine, O Kauravya, in strength and courage![5] That king who is capable of seeing his own faults and knows the distinctions of place and time, obtains great prosperity![6] That person, however, who, though counselled by well-wishers, does not accept their words, good or bad, meets with distress and is obliged to grieve in consequence of the evil policy he pursues.[7] Observe thou a different course of life now, O Bhārata! Thou didst not keep thy soul under restraint, but suffered thyself to be ruled by Duryodhana![8] That which has come upon thee is due to thy own fault. Why then dost thou seek to slay Bhima? Recollecting thy own faults, govern thy wrath now![9] That mean wretch who had, from pride caused the princess of Pānchāla to be brought into the assembly, has been slain by Bhimasena in just revenge.[10] Look at thy own evil acts as álso at those of thy wicked-souled son! The sons of Pāndu are perfectly innocent! Yet have they been treated most cruelly by thee and him!' "[11]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"After he had thus been told nothing but the truth by Krishna,, O monarch, king Dhritarāshtra replied unto Devaki's son, saying,[12]—'It is even so, O thou of mighty arms! What thou sayest, O Mādhava, is perfectly true! It is parental affection, O thou of righteous soul, that caused me to fall away from righteousness![13] By good luck, that tiger among men, the mighty Bhima of true prowess, protected by thee, came not within my embrace![14] Now, however, I am free from wrath and fever. I desire eagerly, O Mādhava to embrace that hero, viz., the second son of Pāndu![15] When all the kings have been dead, when my children are no more, upon the sons of Pāndu depend my welfare and happiness!'[16] Having said these words, the old king then embraced those princes of excellent frames, viz., Bhima, and Dhananjaya, and those two foremost of men, viz., the two sons of Mādri, and wept, and comforted and pronounced blessings upon them."[17]

SECTION XIV.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Commanded by Dhritarāshtra, those bulls of Kuru's race, viz., the Pāndava brothers, accompanied by Kecava, then proceeded to see Gāndhāri![1] The faultless Gāndhāri, afflicted with grief on account of the death of her hundred sons, recollecting that king Yudhishthira the just had slain all his enemies, wished to curse him.[2] Understanding her evil intentions towards the Pāndavas, the son of Satyavati addressed himself for counteracting them at the very outset.[3] Having cleansed himself by the sacred and fresh water of the Ganges, the great *Rishi*, capable of proceeding everywhere at will with the fleetness of the mind, came to that spot.[4] Capable of seeing the heart of every creature with his spiritual vision and with his mind directed towards it, the sage made his appearance there.[5] Endued with great ascetic merit and ever intent on saying what was for the benefit of creatures, the *Rishi*, addressing his daughter-in-law at the proper moment, said,—'Do not avail of this opportunity for denouncing a curse! On the other hand, utilize it for showing thy forgiveness![6] Thou shouldst not be angry with the Pāndavas, O Gāndhāri! Set thy heart on peace! Restrain the words that are about to fall from thy lips! Listen to my advice![7] Thy son, desirous of victory, had beseeched thee every day for the eighteen days that battle lasted, saying,—O mother, bless me who am fighting with my foes![8]—Implored every day in these words by thy son desirous of victory, the answer thou always gavest him was,—Thither is victory where righteousness is![9]—I do not, O Gāndhāri, remember that any words, spoken by thee have become false! Those words, therefore, that thou, implored by

Duryodhana, saidst unto him, could not be false. Thou art always employed in the good of all creatures.[10] Having without doubt reached the other shore in that dreadful battle of Kshatriyas, the sons of Pāndu have certainly won the victory and a measure of righteousness that is much greater.[11] Thou wert formerly observant of the virtue of forgiveness. Why wouldst thou not observe it now? Subdue unrighteousness, O thou that art conversant with righteousness! There is victory where righteousness is![12] Remembering thy own righteousness and the words spoken by thyself, restrain thy wrath, O Gāndhāri! Do not act otherwise, O thou that art beautiful in speech!'[13]—Hearing these words, Gāndhāri said,—'O holy one, I do not cherish any ill feelings towards the Pāndavas, nor do I wish that they should perish! In consequence, however, of grief for the death of my sons, my heart is very powerfully agitated![14] I know that I should protect the Pāndavas with as much care as Kunti herself protects them, and that Dhritarāshtra also should protect them as I should![15] Through the fault of Duryodhana and of Cakuni the son of Suvala, and through the action of Karna and Dusçāsana, this extermination of the Kurus hath taken place![16] In this mather the slightest blame cannot attach to Vibhatsu or to Prithā's son Vrikodara, or to Nakula or Sahadeva, or to Yudhishthira himself.[17] While engaged in battle, the Kauravas, swelling with arrogance and pride, have fallen along with many others (that came to their aid). I am not grieved at this![18] But there has been one act done by Bhima in the very presence of Vāsudeva (that moves my resentment)! The high-souled Vrikodara, having challenged Duryodhana to a dreadful encounter with the mace,[19] and having come to know that my son, while careering in diverse kinds of motion in the battle, was superior to him in skill, struck the latter below the navel![20] It is this that moves my wrath! Why should heroes, for the sake of their lives, cast off obligations of duty that have been determined by high-souled persons conversant with every duty?'"[21]

SECTION XV.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Hearing these words of Gāndhāri, Bhimasena, looking like one in fright, said these words for soothing her.[1]—'Be the act righteous or unrighteous, it was done by me through fear and for the object of protecting my own self! It behoveth thee, therefore, to forgive me now![2] Thy mighty son was incapable of being slain by anybody in a fair and righteous battle. It was for this that I did what was unfair.[3] Duryodhana himself had formerly vanquished Yudhishthira unrighteously. He used always to behave guilefully towards us. It was for this that I had recourse to an unfair act.[4] Thy son was then the sole unslain warrior on his side. In order that that valiant prince might not slay me in the mace-encounter and once more deprive us of our kingdom, I acted in that way.[5] Thou knowest all that thy son had said unto the princess of Pānchāla while the latter, in her season, was clad in a single piece of raiment.[6] Without having disposed of Suyodhana it was imposible for us to rule peacefully the whole Earth with her seas. It was for this that I acted in that way.[7] Thy son inflicted many wrongs on us. In the midst of the assembly he had shown his left thigh unto Draupadi.[8] For that wicked behaviour, thy son deserved to be slain by us even then. At the command, however, of king Yudhishthira the just, we suffered ourselves to be restrained by the compact that had been made.[9] By this means, O queen, thy son provoked deadly hostilities with us. Great were our sufferings in the forest (whither we were driven by thy son). Remembering all this, I acted in that way![10] Having slain Duryodhana in battle, we have crossed the end of our hostilities. Yudhishthira has got back his kingdom, and we also have been freed from wrath!'[11] Hearing these words of Bhima, Gāndhāri said,—'Since thou praisest my son thus (for his skill in battle), he did not deserve such a death! He, however, did all that thou tellest me![12] When Vrishasena, however, had deprived Nakula of his steeds, O Bhārata, thou quaffedst in battle the blood from Dusçāsana's body![13] Such an act is cruel and is censured by the good. It suits only a person that is most disrespectable. It was a wicked act, O Vrikodara, that was then accomplished by thee! It was undeserving of thee!'[14]—Bhima replied, saying,—'It is improper to quaff the blood of even a stranger, what then need be said about quaffing the blood of one's own self? One's brother, again, is like one's own self. There is no difference between them.[15] The blood, however, (that I am regarded to have quaffed) did not, O mother, pass down my lips and teeth! Karna knew this well. My hands only were smeared with (Dusçāsana's) blood.[16] Seeing Nakula deprived of his steeds by Vrishasena in battle, I caused the rejoicing (Kaurava) brothers to be filled with dread.[17] When after the match at dice the tresses of Draupadi were seized, I uttered certain words in rage. Those words are still in my remembrance.[18] I would, for all years to come, have been regarded to have swerved from the duties of a Kshatriya if I had left that vow unaccomplished! It was for this, O queen, that I did that act![19] It behoveth thee not, O Gāndhāri, to impute any fault to me! Without having restrained thy sons in former days, does it behove thee to impute any fault to our innocent selves?'[20]

"Gāndhāri said,—'Unvanquished by any one, thou hast slain a hundred sons of this old man! Oh, why didst thou not spare, O child, even one son of this old couple deprived of kingdom, one whose offences were comparatively lighter?[21] Why didst thou not leave even one crutch for this blind couple?[22] O child, although thou livest unharmed, having slain all my children, yet no grief would have been mine if thou hadst adopted the path of righteousness (in slaying them)!' "[23]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"Having said these words, Gāndhāri, filled with wrath at the slaughter of all her sons and grandsons, enquired after Yudhishthira, saying,—'Where is the king?'[24] After she had said these words, king Yudhishthira, trembling and with joined hands, approached her and said these soft words unto her,[25]—'Here is Yudhishthira, O goddess, that cruel slayer of thy sons! I deserve thy curses, for I am the cause of this universal destruction! Oh, curse me![26] I have no longer any need for life, for kingdom, for wealth! Having caused such friends to be slain, I have proved myself to be a great fool and a hater of friends !'[27]—Unto Yudhishthira who spoke such words, who was overcome with fear, and who stood in her presence, Gāndhāri, drawing long sighs, said nothing.[28] Conversant with the rules of righteousness, the Kuru queen, possessed of great foresight, directed her eyes, from within the folds of the cloth that covered them,* to the tip of Yudhishthira's toe, as the prince, with body bent forwards, was about to fall down at her feet. At this, the king, whose nails had before this been all very beautiful, came to have a sore nail on his toe.†[29-30] Beholding this, Arjuna moved away to the rear of Vāsudeva, and the other sons of Pāndu became restless and moved from one spot to another.[31] Gāndhāri then, having cast off her wrath, comforted the Pāndavas as a mother should. Obtaining her leave, those heroes of broad chests then proceeded together to present themselves to their mother, that parent of heroes.[32] Having seen her sons after a long time, Kunti, who had been filled with anxiety on their account, covered her face with her cloth and began to weep.[33] Having wept for sometime with her children, Prithā beheld the wounds and scars of many weapons on their bodies.[34] She then repeatedly embraced and patted each of her sons, and afflicted with grief wept with Draupadi who had lost all her children and whom she saw lying on the bare Earth, indulging in piteous lamentations.[35]

"Draupadi said,—'O venerable dame, where have all your grandsons, with Abhimanyu among them, gone? Beholding thee in such distress, why are they delaying in making their appearance before thee? Deprived as I am of my children, what need have I of kingdom !'[36] Raising the grief-stricken princess of Pānchāla who was weeping thus, Prithā began to comfort that lady of large eyes.[37] Then Kunti, accompanied by the princess of Pānchāla, and followed by her sons, proceeded towards the grief-afflicted Gāndhāri, herself in greater affliction still.[38] Beholding that illustrious lady with her daughter-in-law, Gāndhāri addressed her, saying,—'Do not, O daughter, grieve so! Behold, I too am as much stricken with grief as thou![39] I think, this universal destruction has been brought about by the irresistible course of Time. Inevitable as it was, this dreadful slaughter has not been due to the voluntary agency of human beings![40] Even that has come to pass which Vidura of great wisdom foretold after Krishna's supplication for peace had failed![41] Do not, therefore, grieve in a matter that was inevitable, especially after its occurrence! Having fallen in battle, they should not be grieved for![42] I am in the same predicament with thee! (If thou actest in such a way) who then will comfort us? Through my fault, this foremost of races has been destroyed.'"[43]

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* Gāndhāri's devotion to her blind lord was such that she always kept her own eyes covered with thick folds of cloth. Because her spouse could not see, therefore, as a Hindu wife, she would not see or use her eyes in this world !—T.

† As oon as Gāndhāri's glance fell upon Yudhishthira's toe, the nai that covered it became burnt and sore.—T.

SECTION XVI.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Having said these words, Gāndhāri, though staying on that spot which was distant from the field of battle, beheld, with her spiritual eye, the slaughter of the Kurus.[1] Devoted to her lord, that highly blessed lady had always practiced high vows. Undergoing the severest penances, she was always truthful in her speech.[2] In consequence of the gift of the boon by the great *Rishi* Vyāsa of sanctified deeds, she became possessed of spiritual knowledge and power. Piteous were the lamentations in which that dame then indulged.[3] Endued with great intelligence, the Kuru dame saw, from a distance, but as if from a near point, that field of battle, terrible to behold and full of wonderful sights, of those foremost of fighters.[4] Scattered all over with bones and hair, and covered with streams of blood, that field was strewn with thousands upon thousands of dead bodies on every side.[5] Covered with the blood of elephants and horses and car-warriors and combatants of others kinds, it teemed with headless trunks and trunkless heads.[6] And it resounded with the cries of elephants and steeds and men and women, and abounded with jackals and cranes and ravens and *Kankas* and crows.[7] And it was the sporting ground of *Rākshasas* subsisting on human flesh. And it swarmed with ospreys and vultures and resounded with the inauspicious concert of jackals.[8] Then king Dhritarāshtra at the command of Vyāsa, and all the sons of Pāndu with Yudhishthira at their head,[9] with Vāsudeva and all the Kuru ladies, proceeded to the field of battle.[10] Those ladies, bereaved of their lords, having reached Kurukshetra, beheld their slain brothers and sons and sires and husbands lying on the ground,[11] and in course of being devoured by beasts of prey and wolves and ravens and crows and ghosts and *Piçāchas* and *Rākshasas* and diverse other wanderers of the night.[12] Beholding that carnage which resembled the sights seen on the sporting ground of Rudra, the ladies uttered loud shrieks and quickly alighted from their costly vehicles.[13] Witnessing sights the like of which they had never before witnessed, the Bharata ladies felt their limbs to be deprived of strength and fell down on the ground.[14] Others became so stupified that they lost all their senses. Indeed, the Pānchāla and the Kuru ladies were plunged into unutterable distress.[15] Beholding that dreadful field of battle resounding on every direction with the cries of those grief-stricken ladies, the daughter of Suvala, acquainted with every duty,[16] addressed the lotus-eyed Keçava, that foremost of all men. Witnessing that universal slaughter of the Kurus and filled with grief at the sight, she said these words:[17]—'Behold, O lotus-eyed Mādhava, these daughters-in-law of mine! Deprived of their lords, they are uttering, with deshevelled hair, piteous cries of woe like a flight of she-ospreys![18] Meeting with those dead bodies, they are calling back to their memories the great Bharata chiefs! They are running hither and thither in large bands towards their sons and brothers and sires and husbands![19] Behold, O mighty-armed one, the field is covered with mothers of heroes, all of whom, however, have been bereaved of children! There, those portions again are covered with spouses of heroes, who have, however, been bereaved of their spouses![20] Behold, the field of battle is adorned with those tigers among men, viz., Bhishma and Karna and

Abhimanyu and Drona and Drupada and Calya, as if with blazing fires![21] Behold, it is adorned also with the golden coats of mail, and with the costly gems, of high-souled warriors, and with their *Angadas* and *Keyuras* and garlands![22] Behold, it is strewn with darts and spiked clubs hurled by heroic hands, and swords and diverse kinds of keen shafts and bows![23] Beasts of prey, assembled together, are standing or sporting or lying down as it likes them![24] Behold, O puissant hero, the field of battle is even such! At this sight, O Janārddana, I am burning with grief![25] In the destruction of the Pānchālas and the Kurus, O slayer of Madhu, I think, the five elements (of which everything is made) have been destroyed![26] Fierce vultures and other birds, in thousands, are dragging those blood-dyed bodies, and seizing them by their armour, are devouring them![27] Who is there that could think of the death of such heroes as Jayadratha and Karna and Drona and Bhishma and Abhimanyu?[28] Alas, though incapable of being slain, they have yet been slain, O destroyer of Madhu! Behold, vultures and *Kankas* and ravens and hawks and dogs and jackals are feasting upon them![29] There, those tigers among men, that fought on Duryodhana's side, and took the field in wrath, are now lying like extinguished fires![30] All of them are worthy of sleeping on soft and clean beds. But, alas, plunged into distress, they are sleeping today on the bare ground![31] Bards reciting their praises used to delight them before at proper times. They are now listening to the fierce and inauspicious cries of jackals![32] Those illustrious heroes who used formerly to sleep on costly beds with their limbs smeared with sandal-paste and powdered aloe, alas, now sleep on the dust![33] These vultures and wolves and ravens have now become their ornaments. Repeatedly uttering inauspicious and fierce cries, those creatures are now dragging their bodies![34] Delighting in battle, those heroes, looking cheerful, have still beside them their keen shafts, well-tempered swords, and bright maces, as if life has not yet departed from them![35] Many foremost of heroes, possessed of beauty and fair complexions and adorned with garlands of gold, are sleeping on the ground! Behold, beasts of prey are dragging and tearing them![36] Others, with massive arms, are sleeping with maces in their embrace, as if those were beloved wives![37] Others, still cased in armour, are holding in their hands their bright weapons. Beasts of prey are not mangling them, O Janārddana, regarding them to be still alive![38] The beautiful garlands of pure gold on the necks of other illustrious heroes, as the latter are being dragged by carnivorous creatures, are scattered about on every side![39] There, those fierce wolves, numbering in thousands, are dragging the golden chains round the necks of many illustrious heroes stilled by death![40] Many, whom bards well-trained to their work, formerly used, with their hymns and eulogies of grave import, to delight every morning,[41] are now surrounded by fair ladies stricken with grief and weeping and crying around them in woe, O tiger of Vrishni's race![42] The faces of those beautiful ladies, O Keçava, though pale, look resplendent still like an assemblage of red lotuses![43] Those Kuru ladies have ceased to weep, with their respective followers and companions. They are all filled with anxiety. Overwhelmed with sorrow, they are running hither and thither.[44] The faces of those fair ones have, with weeping and anger, become resplendent as the morning sun or gold or burnished copper.[45] Hearing each other's lamentations of incomplete sense, those ladies, in consequence of the loud wails of woe bursting from every side, are unable to catch each other's meaning.[46] Some amongst them, drawing long sighs and indulging in repeated lamentations, are stupified by grief and are abandoning their life-breaths![47] Many of them, beholding the bodies (of their sons, husbands, or sires), are weeping and setting up loud wails. Others are striking their heads with their own soft hands.[48] The Earth, strewn with severed heads and hands and other limbs mingled together and gathered in large heaps, looks resplendent with these signs of havoc![49] Beholding many headless trunks of great beauty, and many heads without trunks, those fair ones are lying senseless on the ground for a long while.[50] Uniting particular heads with particular trunks, those ladies, senseless with grief, are again discovering their mistakes, and saying,—This is not this one's

—and are weeping more bitterly![51] Others, uniting arms and thighs and feet, cut off with shafts, are giving way to grief and losing their senses repeatedly (at the sight of the restored forms)![52] Some amongst the Bharata ladies, beholding the bodies of their lords,—bodies that have been mangled by animals and birds and severed of their heads,—are succeeding not in recognising them.[53] Others, beholding their brothers, sires, sons, and husbands slain by foes, are, O destroyer of Madhu, striking their heads with their own hands.[54] Miry with flesh and blood, the Earth has become impassable with arms still holding swords in their grasp, and with heads adorned with ear-rings.[55] Beholding the field strewn with their brothers and sires, and sons, those faultless ladies, who had never before suffered the least distress, are now plunged into unutterable woe![56] Behold, O Janārddana, those numerous bevies of Dhritarāshtra's daughters-in-law, resembling successive multitudes of handsome fillies adorned with excellent manes![57] What, O Keçava, can be a sadder spectacle for me to behold than that presented by those ladies of fair forms who have assumed such an aspect?[58] Without doubt, I must have perpetrated great sins in my former lives, since I am beholding, O Keçava, my sons and grandsons and brothers all slain by foes!' While indulging in such lamentations in grief, Gāndhāri's eyes fell upon her son (Duryodhana)."[59]

SECTION XVII.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Beholding Duryodhana, Gāndhāri, deprived of her senses by grief, suddenly fell down on the Earth like an uprooted plantain tree.[1] Having regained her senses soon, she began to weep, repeatedly uttering loud wails at the sight of her son lying on the bare ground, covered with blood.[2] Embracing her son, Gāndhāri indulged in piteous lamentations for him. Stricken with grief, and with senses exceedingly agitated, the Kuru queen exclaimed,—'Alas, O son!' 'Alas, O son!'[3]—Burning with sorrow, the queen drenched with her tears the body of her son, possessed of massive and broad shoulders, and adorned with garlands and collar. Addressing Hrishikeça who stood near, she said,[4]—'On the eve of this battle, O puissant one, that has exterminated this race, this foremost of kings, O thou of Vrishni's race, said unto me,[5]—In this internecine battle, O mother, wish me victory!—When he said these words, myself, knowing that a great calamity had come upon us, told him even this, O tiger among men, viz.,—Thither is victory where righteousness is![6] And since, O son, thy heart is set on battle, thou wilt, without doubt, obtain those regions that are attainable by (the use of) weapons (and sport there) like a celestial![7]—Even these were the words that I then said unto him. I did not then grieve for my son. I grieve, however, for the helpless Dhritarāshtra bereaved of friends and kinsmen![8] Behold, O Mādhava, my son, that foremost of warriors, wrathful, skilled in weapons, and irresistible in battle, sleeping on the bed of heroes![9] Behold the reverses brought about by Time! This scorcher of foes that used of old to walk at the head of all crowned persons now sleepeth on the dust![10] Without doubt, the heroic Duryodhana, when he sleeps on that bed which is the heroe's, hath obtained the most unattainable end![11] Inauspicious jackals are now delighting that prince asleep on the heroe's bed, who was fermerly delighted by the fairest of ladies sitting round him![12] He who was formerly encircled by kings vieing with one another to give him pleasure, alas, he, slain and lying on the ground, is now encircled by vultures![13] He who was formerly fanned with beautiful fans by fair ladies, is now fanned by (carnivorous) birds with flaps of their wings![14] Possessed of great strength and true prowess, this mighty-armed prince, slain by Bhimasena in battle, sleeps like an elephant slain by a lion![15] Behold Duryodhana, O Krishna, lying on the bare ground, covered with blood, slain by Bhimasena with his mace![16] That mighty-armed one who had in battle assembled together eleven *Akshauhinis* of troops, O Keçava, hath, in consequence of his own evil policy, been now slain.[17] Alas, there that great bowman and mighty car-warrior sleeps, slain by Bhimasena, like a tiger slain by a lion![18] Having disregarded Vidura, as also his own sire, this reckless, foolish, and wicked prince hath succumbed to death, in consequence of his disregard of the old ![19] He who had ruled the Earth, without a rival, for thirteen years, alas, that prince, that son of mine, sleepeth today on the bare ground, slain by his foes ![20] Not long before, O Krishna, I beheld the Earth, full of elephants and kine and horses, ruled by Duryodhana ![21] Today, O thou of mighty-arms, I see her ruled by another, and destitute of elephants and kine and horses! What need have I, O Mādhava, of life ?[22] Behold, again, this sight that is more painful than the death of my son, the sight, *viz.*, of these fair ladies weeping by the side of the slain heroes ![23] Behold, O Krishna, the mother of Lakshmana, that lady of large hips, with her tresses dishevelled, that dear spouse of Duryodhana,* resembling a sacrificial altar of gold ![24] Without doubt, this damsel of great intelligence, while her mighty-armed lord was formerly alive, used to sport within the embrace of her lord's handsome arms ![25] Why, indeed, does not this heart of mine break into a hundred fragments at the sight of my son and grandson slain in battle ?[26] Alas, that faultless lady now smells (the head of) her son covered with blood ! Now, again, that lady of fair thighs is gently rubbing Duryodhana's body with her fair hand.[27] At one time she is sorrowing for her lord and at another for her son ! At one time she looketh on her lord, at another on her son ![28] Behold, O Mādhava, striking her head with her hands, she falls upon the breast of her heroic spouse, the king of the Kurus ![29] Possessed of complexion like that of the filaments of the lotus, she still looketh beautiful like a lotus. The unfortunate princess now rubbeth the face of her son and now that of her lord ![30] If the scriptures and the *Çrutis* be true, without doubt, this king has obtained those regions (of blessedness) that one may win by the use of weapons !' "[31]

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* Lit., one who dwelt on the breast of Duryodhana.—T.

SECTION XVIII.

"Gāndhāri said,—'Behold, O Mādhava, my century of sons, incapable of fatigue (from exertion in battle), have all been slain by Bhimasena with his mace in battle![1] That which grieves me more today is that these my daughters-in-law, of tender years, deprived of sons and with dishevelled hair, are wandering on the field today![2] Alas, they who formerly walked only on the terraces of goodly mansions with feet adorned with many ornaments, are now, in great affliction of heart, obliged to touch with those feet of theirs this hard Earth miry with blood![3] Reeling in sorrow, they are wandering like inebriated persons, driving away vultures and jackals and crows with difficulty![4]* Behold, that lady of faultless limbs, and slender waist, seeing this terrible carnage, falleth down, overwhelmed with grief![5] Beholding this princess, this mother of Lakshmana, O thou of mighty-arms, my heart is torn with grief![6] These beautiful ladies of fair arms, some seeing their brothers, some their husbands, and some their sons, lying down in death on the bare ground, are themselves falling down, seizing the arms of the slain![7] Listen, O unvanquished one, to the loud wails of those elderly ladies and those others of middle age at sight of this terrible carnage![8] Supporting themselves against broken boxes of cars and the bodies of slain elephants and steeds, behold, O thou of great might, those dames, worn out with fatigue, are resting themselves![9] Behold, O Krishna, some one amongst them, taking up some kinsman's severed head decked with beautiful nose and ear-rings, is standing in grief![10] I think, O sinless one, that both those and myself of little understanding must have committed great sins in our former lives,[11] since, O Janārddana, all our relatives and kinsmen have thus been slain by king Yudhishthira the just! Our acts, righteous or unrighteous, cannot go for nothing, O thou of Vrishni's race![12]† Behold, O Mādhava, those young ladies of beautiful bosoms and abdomen, well-born, possessed of modesty, having black eye-lashes and tresses of the same color on their heads, endued with voice sweet and dear like that of swans, are falling down, deprived of their senses by great grief and uttering piteous cries like flights of cranes![13-14] Behold, O lotus-eyed hero, their beatiful faces resembling-full-blown lotuses, are scorched by the sun![15] Alas, O Vāsudeva, the wives of my proud children possessed of prowess like that of infuriate elephants, are now exposed to the gaze of common people![16] Behold, O Govinda, the shields decked with hundred moons, the standards of solar effulgence, the golden coats of mail, and the collars and cuirasses made of gold,[17] and the head-gears, of my sons, scattered on the Earth, are blazing with splendour like sacrificial fires over which have been poured libations of clarified butter![18] There, Dusçāsana sleepeth, felled by Bhima, and the blood of all his limbs quaffed by that heroic slayer of foes![19] Behold that other son of mine, O Madhava, slain by Bhima with his mace, impelled by Draupadi and the recollection of his woes at the time of the match at dice![20] Addressing the dice-won princess of Pānchāla in the midst of the assembly, this Dusçāsana, desirous of doing what was agreeable to his (elder) brother as also to Karna, O Janārddana, had said,[21]—Thou art now the wife of a slave! With Sahadeva and Nakula and Arjuna, O lady, enter our household now![22]—On that occasion, O Krishna, I said unto king Duryodhana,—O son, cast off (from thy side) the wrathful Cakuni![23] Know that thy maternal uncle is of very wicked soul and exceedingly fond of quarrel! Casting him off without delay, make peace with the Pāndavas, O son![24] O thou of little intelligence, thinkest thou not of Bhimasena filled with wrath! Thou art piercing him with thy wordy shafts like a person striking an elephant with burning brands![25]—Alas, disregarding my words, he vomitted his wordy poison at them like a snake vomitting his poison at a bovine bull,—at them who had already been pierced with his wordy darts![26] There, that Dusçāsana sleepeth, stretching his two massive arms, slain by Bhimasena like a mighty elephant by a lion![27] The very wrathful Bhimasena perpetrated a most horrible act by drinking in battle the blood of his foe!' "[18]

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* The Bengal reading is slightly different.—T.

† *I. e.*, their fruits must have to be enjoyed or suffered.—T.

SECTION XIX.

"Gāndhāri said,—'There, O Mādhava, my son Vikarna, applauded by the wise, lieth on the bare ground, slain by Bhima and mangled horribly![1] Deprived of life, O slayer of Madhu, Vikarna lieth in the midst of (slain) elephants like the moon in the autumnal sky surrounded by blue clouds![2] His broad palm, cased in leathern fence, and scarred by constant wielding of the bow, is pierced with difficulty by vultures desirous of feeding upon it![3] His helpless young wife, O Mādhava, is continually endeavouring, without success, to drive away those vultures desirous of feeding on carrion![4] The youthful and brave and handsome Vikarna, O bull among men, brought up in luxury and deserving of every kind of weal, now sleepeth amid the dust, O Mādhava![5] Though all his vital parts have been pierced with cloth-yard shafts and bearded arrows and *nālikas*, yet that beauty of person which was his hath not forsaken this best of the Bharatas![6] There, my son Durmuksha, that slayer of large bands of foes, sleepeth, with face towards the enemy, slain by the heroic Bhimasena in observance of his vow![7] His face O Krishna, half eaten away by beasts of prey, looketh more handsome, O child, even like the moon on the seventh day of the lighted fortnight![8] Behold, O Krishna, the face of that heroic son of mine, which is even such! How could that son of mine be slain by foes and thus made to eat the dust?[9] O amiable one, how could that Durmukha, before whom no foe could stand, be slain by foes, O subjugator of celestial regions![10] Behold, O slayer of Madhu, that other son of Dhritarāshtra, viz., Chitrasena, slain and lying on the ground, that hero who was the model of all bowmen?[11] Those young ladies, afflicted with grief and uttering piteous cries, are now sitting, with beasts of prey, around his fair form adorned with wreaths and garlands![12] These loud wails of woe, uttered by women, and these cries and roars of beasts of prey, seem exceedingly wonderful to me, O Krishna![13] Youthful and handsome, and always waited upon and served by the most beautiful ladies, my son Vivinçati, O Mādhava, sleepeth there, stained with dust![14] His armour hath been pierced with arrows. Slain in the midst of the carnage, alas, the heroic Vivingçati is now surrounded and waited upon by vultures![15] Having in battle penetrated the ranks of the Pāndava army, that hero now lieth on the bed of a hero,—on the bed, that is, of an exalted Kshatriya![16] Behold, O Krishna, his very beautiful face, with a smile playing on it, adorned with excellent nose and fair eyebrows, and resembling the resplendent Moon himself![17] Formerly a large number of the most beautiful ladies used to wait upon him, like thousands of celestial girls upon a sporting *Gandharva*![18] Who again could endure my son Dussaha, that slayer of heroic foes, that hero, that ornament of assemblies, that irresistible warrior, that resister of foes?[19] The body of Dussaha, covered with arrows, looks resplendent like a mountain overgrown with flowering *Karnikāras*.[20] With his garland of gold and his bright armour, Dussaha, though deprived of life, looks resplendent yet, like a white mountain or fire!' "[21]

SECTION XX.

"Gāndhāri said,—'He whose might and courage were regarded, O Keçava, as a one and half times superior to those of his sire and thee, he who resembled a fierce and proud lion,[1] he who, without a follower, alone pierced the impenetrable array of my son, he who proved to be the death of many, alas, he now sleepeth there, having himself succumbed to death![2] I see, O Krishna, the splendour of that son of Arjuna, of that hero of immeasurable energy, viz., Abhimanyu, hath not been dimmed even in death![3] There, the daughter of Virāta, the daughter-in-law of the wielder of *Gāndiva*, that girl of faultless beauty, overwhelmed with grief at sight of her heroic husband, is indulging in lamentations![4] That young wife, viz., the daughter of Virāta, approaching her lord, is gently rubbing him, O Krishna, with her hand![5] Formerly, that highly intelligent and exceedingly beautiful girl, inebriated with honied wines, used bashfully to embrace her lord, and kiss the face of Subhadrā's son, that face which resembled a full-blown lotus and which was supported on a neck adorned with three lines like those of a conch-shell ![6-7] Taking off her lord's golden coat of mail, O hero, that damsel is gazing now on the blood-dyed body of her spouse ![8] Beholding her lord, O Krishna, that girl addresses thee and says,—O lotus-eyed one, this hero whose eyes resembled thine, hath been slain ![9] In might and energy, and prowess also, he was thy equal, O sinless one ! He resembled thee very much in beauty. Yet he sleeps on the ground, slain by the enemy ![10]—Addressing her own lord, the damsel says again,—Thou wert brought up in every luxury ! Thou usedst to sleep on soft skins of the *Ranku* deer ! Alas, does not thy body feel pain today by lying thus on the bare ground ?[11] Stretching thy massive arms adorned with golden *Angadas*, resembling a couple of elephant's trunks, and covered with skin hardened by frequent use of the bow, thou sleepest, O lord,[12] in peace, as if exhausted with the toil of too much exercise in the gymnasium ! Alas, why dost thou not address me that am weeping so ?[13] I do not remember to have ever offended thee ! Why dost thou not speak to me then ? Formerly, thou usedst to address me even when thou wouldst see me at a distance ![14] O reverend sir, whither wilt thou go, leaving behind thee the much-respected Subhadrā, these thy sires that resemble the very celestials, and my own wretched self distracted with woe ?[15]—Behold, O Krishna, gathering with her hands the blood-dyed locks of her lord and placing his head on her lap, the beautiful damsel is speaking to him as if he were alive,[16]—How couldst those great car-warriors slay thee in the midst of battle,—thee that art the sister's son of Vāsudeva and the son of the wielder of *Gāndiva* ?[17] Alas, fie on those warriors of wicked deeds, viz., Kripa and Karna and Jayadratha and Drona and Drona's son, by whom thou wert deprived of life ![18] What was the state of mind of those great car-warriors at that time when they surrounded thee, a warrior of tender years, and slew thee to my grief ?[19] How couldst thou, O hero, who had so many protectors, be slain so helplessly in the very sight of the Pāndavas and the Pānchālas ?[20] Beholding thee, O hero, slain in battle by many persons united together, how is that tiger among men, that son of Pāndu, viz., thy sire, able to bear the burden of life ?[21] Neither the acquisition of a vast kingdom, nor the defeat of their foes, conduces to the joy of the Pārthas bereft of thee, O lotus-eyed one ![22] By the practice of virtue and self-restraint, I shall very soon repair to those regions of bliss which thou hast acquired by the use of weapons ! Protect me, O hero, when I repair to those regions ![23] When one's hour does not come, one cannot die, since, wretched that I am, I still draw breath after seeing thee slain in battle ![24] Having repaired to the region of the *Pitris*, whom else, like me, dost thou address now, O tiger among men, in sweet words mingled with smiles ?[25] Without doubt, thou wilt agitate the hearts of the *Apsarās* in heaven, with thy great beauty and thy soft words mingled with smiles ![26] Having obtained the regions reserved for persons of righteous deeds, thou art now united, O son of Subhadrā, with the *Apsarās* ! While sporting with them, recollect at times my good acts towards thee ![27] Thy union with me in this world had, it seems, been ordained for only six months, for on the seventh, O hero, thou hast been bereft of life ![28]—O Krishna, the ladies of the royal house of Matsya are dragging away the afflicted Uttarā, baffled of all her purposes, while lamenting in this strain ![29] Those ladies, dragging away the afflicted Uttarā, themselves still more afflicted than that girl, are weeping and uttering loud wails at sight of the slain Virāta ![30] Mangled with the weapons and shafts of Drona, prostrate on the ground, and covered with blood, Virāta is encompassed by screaming vultures and howling jackals and crowing ravens ![31] Those black-eyed ladies, approaching the prostrate form of the Matsya king over which carnivorous birds are uttering cries of joy, are endeavouring to turn the body. Weakened by grief and exceedingly afflicted, they are unable to do what they intend ![32] Scorched by the Sun, and worn out with exertion and toil, their faces have become colourless and pale ![33] Behold also, O Mādhava, those other children, besides Abhimanyu, viz., Uttara, Sudakshina the prince of the Kāmvojas, and the handsome Lakshmana, all lying on the field of battle!' "[24]

SECTION XXI.

"Gāndhāri said,—'There the mighty Karna, that great bowman, lieth on the ground! In battle he was like a blazing fire! That fire, however, hath now been extinguished by the energy of Pārtha![1] Behold, Vikartana's son Karna, after having slain many *Atirathas*, has been prostrated on the bare ground, and is drenched with blood![2] Wrathful and possessed of great energy, he was a great bowman and a mighty car-warrior! Slain in battle by the wielder of *Gāndiva*, that hero now sleepeth on the ground![3] My sons, those mighty car-warriors, from fear of the Pāndavas, fought, placing Karna at their head, like a herd of elephants with its leader to the fore![4] Alas, like a tiger slain by a lion, or an elephant by an infuriate elephant, that warrior hath been slain in battle by Savyasāchin![5] Assembled together, O tiger among men, the wives of that warrior, with dishevelled tresses and loud wails of grief, are sitting around that fallen hero![6] Filled with anxiety caused by the thoughts of that warrior, king Yudhishthira the just could not, for thirteen years, obtain a wink of sleep![7] Incapable of being checked by foes in battle like Maghavat himself who is invincible by enemies, Karna was like the all-destroying fire of fierce flames at the end of the *Yuga*, and immoveable like Himavat himself![8] That hero became the protector of Dhritarāshtra's son, O Mādhava! Alas, deprived of life, he now lieth on the bare ground, like a tree prostrated by the wind![9] Behold, the wife of Karna and mother of Vrishasena, is indulging in piteous lamentations and crying and weeping and falling upon the ground![10] Even now she exclaims,—Without doubt, thy preceptor's curse hath pursued thee! When the wheel of thy car was swallowed up by the Earth, the cruel Dhananjaya cut off thy head with an arrow![11] Alas, fie (on heroism and skill)!—That lady, the mother of Sushena, exceedingly afflicted and uttering cries of woe, is falling down, deprived of her senses, at the sight of the mighty-armed and brave Karna prostrated on the Earth, with his waist still encircled with a belt of gold![12] Carnivorous creatures, feeding on the body of that illustrious hero, have reduced it to very small dimensions. The sight is not gladdening, like that of the moon on the fourteenth night of the dark-fortnight![13] Falling down on the Earth, the cheerless dame is rising up again. Burning with grief on account of the death of her son also, she cometh and smelleth the face of her lord!' "[14]

SECTION XXII.

"Gāndhāri said,—"Slain by Bhimasena, behold, the lord of Avanti lies there! Vultures and jackals and crows are feeding upon that hero! Though possessed of many friends, he lies now perfectly friendless![1] Behold, O slayer of Madhu, having made a great slaughter of foes, that warrior is now lying on the bed of a hero, covered with blood![2] Jackals, and *Kankas*, and other carnivorous creatures of diverse kinds, are dragging him now! Behold the reverses brought about by Time![3] His wives, assembled together, and crying in grief, are sitting around that hero who in life was a terrible slayer of foes but who now lies on the bed of a hero![4] Behold, Pratipa's son Vālhika, that mighty bowman possessed of great energy, slain with a broad-headed shaft, is now lying on the ground like a sleeping tiger![5] Though deprived of life, the color of his face is still exceedingly bright, like that of the moon at full, risen on the fifteenth day of the lighted fortnight![6] Burning with grief on account of the death of his son, and desirous of accomplishing his vow, Indra's son (Arjuna) hath slain there that son of Vriddhakshatra![7] Behold that Jayadratha, who was protected by the illustrious Drona, slain by Pārtha bent on accomplishing his vow, after penetrating through eleven *Akshauhinis* of troops![8] Inauspicious vultures, O Janārddana, are feeding upon Jayadratha, the lord of the Sindhu-Sauviras, full of pride and energy![9] Though sought to be protected by his devoted wives, see, O Achyuta, carnivorous creatures are dragging his body away to a jungle in the vicinity![10] The Kāmvoja and Yavana wives of that mighty-armed lord of the Sindhus and the Sauviras are waiting upon him for protecting him (from the wild beasts).[11] At that time, O Janārddana, when Jayadratha, assisted by the Kekayas, endeavoured to ravish Draupadi, he deserved to be slain by the Pāndavas![12] From regard, however, for Dusçalā, they set him free on that occasion! Why, O Krishna, did they not show some regard for that Dusçalā once more![13] That daughter of mine, of tender years, is now crying in grief! She is striking her body with her own hands and censuring the Pāndavas!*[14] What, O Krishna, can be a greater grief to me than that my daughter of tender years should be a widow and all my daughters-in-law should become lordless![15] Alas, alas, behold, my daughter Dusçalā, having cast off her grief and fears, is running hither and thither in search after the head of her husband![16] He who had checked all the Pāndavas desirous of rescuing their son, after causing the slaughter of a vast force, at last himself succumbed to death![17] Alas, those wives of his, with faces as beautiful as the moon, are carrying, sitting around that irresistible hero who resembled an infuriate elephant!' "[18]

SECTION XXIII.

"Gāndhāri said,—'There lies Calya, the maternal uncle himself of Nakula, slain in battle, O sire, by the pious and virtuous Yudhishthira![1] He used everywhere, O bull among men, to boast of his equality with thee! That mighty car-warrior, viz., the ruler of the Madras, now lieth, deprived of life![2] When he accepted the drivership of Karna's car in battle, he sought to damp the energy of Karna for giving victory to the sons of Pāndu![3] Alas, alas, behold the smooth face of Calya, beautiful as the moon, and adorned with eyes resembling the petals of the lotus, eaten away by crows![4] There, the tongue of that king, of the complexion of heated gold, lolling out of his mouth, is, O Krishna, being eaten away by carnivorous birds![5] The ladies of the royal house of Madra, uttering loud wails of woe, are sitting around the body of that king, that ornament of assemblies, deprived of life by Yudhishthira![6] Those ladies are sitting around that fallen hero like a herd of she-elephants in their season around their leader sunk in a slough.[7-8] Behold the brave Calya, that giver of protection, that foremost of car-warriors, stretched on the bed of heroes, his body mangled with shafts![9] There, king Bhagadatta of great prowess, the ruler of a mountainous kingdom, the foremost of all wielders of the elephant-hook, lieth on the ground, deprived of life![10] Behold the garland of gold that he still wears on his head, looketh resplendent! Though the body is being eaten away by beasts of prey, that garland still adorns the fair locks on his head![11] Fierce was the battle that took place between this king and Pārtha, making the very hair to stand on end, like that beteen Cakra and the *Asura* Vritra![12] This mighty-armed one, having fought Dhananjaya the son of Prithā, and having reduced him to great straits, was at last slain by his antagonist![13] He who had no equal on Earth in heroism and energy, that achiever of terrible feats in battle, viz., Bhishma, lieth there, deprived of life![14] Behold the son of Cāntanu, O Krishna, that warrior of solar effulgence, stretched on the Earth, like the Sun himself fallen from the firmament at the end of the *Yuga*![15] Having scorched his foes with the fire of his weapons in battle, that valiant warrior, that Sun among men, O Keçava, hath set like the real Sun at evening![16] Behold that hero, O Krishna, who in knowledge of duty was equal to Devāpi himself, now lying on a bed of arrows, so worthy of heroes![17] Having spread his excellent bed of barbed and unbarbed arrows, that hero lieth on it like the divine Skanda on a clump of heath![18] Indeed, the son of Gangā lieth, resting his head on that excellent pillow, consisting of three arrows,—becoming complement of his bed,—given him by the wielder of *Gāndiva*![19] For obeying the command of his sire, this illustrious one drew up his vital seed. Unrivalled in battle, that son of Cāntanu lieth there, O Mādhava![20] Of righteous soul and acquainted with every duty, by the aid of his knowledge relating to both the worlds, that hero, though mortal, is still bearing his life like an immortal![21] When Cāntanu's son lieth today, struck down with arrows, it seems that no other person is alive on Earth that possesseth learning and prowess and that is competent to achieve great feats in battle![22] Truthful in speech, this righteous and virtuous hero, solicited by the Pāndavas, told them the means of his own death![23] Alas, he who had revived the line of Kuru that had become extinct, that illustrious person possessed of great intelligence, hath left the world with all the Kurus in his company![24] Of whom, O Mādhava, will the Kurus enquire of religion and duty after that bull among men, viz., Devavrata, who resembles a god, shall have gone to heaven?[25] Behold Drona, that foremost of Brāhmanas, that preceptor of Arjuna, of Sātyaki, and of the Kurus, lying on the ground![26] Endued with mighty energy, Drona, O Mādhava, was as conversant with the four kinds of arms as the chief of the celestials or Cukra of Bhrigu's race![27] Through his grace, Vibhatsu the son of Pāndu hath achieved the most difficult feats! Deprived of life, he now lies on the ground! Weapons refused to come (at last) at his bidding![28] Placing him at their head, the Kauravas had challenged the Pāndavas. That foremost of all wielders of weapons was at last mangled with weapons![29] As he careered in battle, scorching his foes in every direction, his course resembled that of a blazing conflagration. Alas, deprived of life, he now lies on the ground, like an extinguished fire![30] The handle of the bow is yet in his grasp. The leathern fences, O Mādhava, still encase his fingers. Though slain, he still looketh as if alive![31] The four Vedas, and all kinds of weapons, O Keçava, did not abandon that hero even as these do not abandon the Lord Prajāpati himself.[32] His auspicious feet, deserving of every adoration and adored as a matter of fact by bards and eulogists, and worshipped by disciples, are now being dragged by jackals![33] Deprived of her senses by grief, Kripi wofully attendeth, O slayer of Madhu, on that Drona who hath been slain by Drupada's son![34] Behold that afflicted lady, fallen upon the Earth, with dishevelled hair and face hanging down. Alas, she attendeth in sorrow upon her lifeless lord, that foremost of all wielders of weapons, lying on the ground![35] Many

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* I adopt the Bombay reading of the second line.—T.

Brahmachārins, with matted locks on their head, are attending upon the body of Drona that is cased in armour rent through and through, O Keçava, with the shafts of Dhrishtadyumna![36] The illustrious and delicate Kripi, cheerless and afflicted, is endeavouring to perform the last rites on the body of her lord slain in battle![37] There, those reciters of *Sāmans*, having placed the body of Drona on the funeral pyre and having ignited the fire with due rites, are singing the three (well-known) *Sāmans*![38] Those *Brahmachārins*, with matted locks on their heads, have piled the funeral pyre of that Brāhmana with bows and darts and car-boxes, O Mādhava![39] Having collected diverse other kinds of shafts, that hero of great energy is being consumed by them! Indeed, having placed him on the pyre, they are singing and weeping.[40] Others are reciting the three (well-known) *Sāmans* that are used on such occasions. Consuming Drona on that fire, like fire in fire,[41] those disciples of his, of the regenerate class, are proceeding towards the banks of Gangā, along the left side of the pyre and having placed Kripi at their head!' "[42]

SECTION XXIV.

"Gāndhāri said,—'Behold the son of Somadatta, who was slain by Yuyudhāna, pecked at and torn by a large number of birds![1] Burning with grief at the death of his son, Somadatta, O Janārddana, (as he lies there) seems to censure the great bowman Yuyudhāna![2] There the mother of Bhuriçravas, that faultless lady, overcome with grief, is addressing her lord Somadatta, saying,[3]—By good luck, O king, thou seest not this terrible carnage of the Bharatas, this extermination of the Kurus, this sight that resembles the scenes occurring at the end of the *Yuga*![4] By good luck, thou seest not thy heroic son, who bore the device of the sacrificial stake on his banner and who performed numerous sacrifices with profuse presents to all, slain on the the field of battle![5] By good luck, thou hearest not those frightful wails of woe uttered amidst this carnage by thy daughters-in-law like the screams of a flight of cranes on the bosom of the sea![6] Thy daughters-in-law, bereaved of both husbands and sons, are running hither and thither, each clad in a single piece of raiment and each with her black tresses all dishevelled![7] By good luck, thou seest not thy son, that tiger among men, deprived of one of his arms, overthrown by Arjuna, and even now in course of being devoured by beasts of prey![8] By good luck, thou seest not today thy son Cala slain in battle, and Bhuriçravas deprived of life, and thy widowed daughters-in-law plunged into grief![9] By good luck, thou seest not the golden umbrella of that illustrious warrior who had the sacrificial stake for the device on his banner, torn and broken on the terrace of his car![10] There the black-eyed wives of Bhuriçravas are indulging in piteous lamentations, surrounding their lord slain by Sātyaki![11] Afflicted with grief on account of the slaughter of their lord, those ladies, indulging in copious lamentations, are falling down on the Earth with their faces towards the ground, and slowly approaching thee, O Keçava![12] —Alas, why did Arjuna of pure deeds perpetrate such a censurable act, since he struck off the arm of a heedless warrior who was brave and devoted to the performance of sacrifices![13] Alas, Sātyaki did an act that was still more sinful, for he took the life of a person of restrained soul while sitting in the observance of the *prāya* vow![14] Alas, O righteous one, thou liest on the ground, slain unfairly by two foes!—Even thus, O Mādhava, those wives of Bhuriçravas are crying aloud in woe![15] There, those wives of that warrior, all possessed of slender waists, are placing upon their laps the lopped off arm of their lord and weeping bitterly![16]—Here is that arm which used to invade the girdles, grind the deep bosoms, and touch the navel, the thighs, and the hips, of fair women, and loosen the ties of the drawers worn by them![17] Here is that arm which slew foes and dispelled the fears of friends, which gave thousands of kine and exterminated Kshatriyas in battle![18] In the presence of Vāsudeva himself, Arjuna of unstained deeds lopped it off thy heedless self while thou wert engaged with another in battle![19] What, indeed, wilt thou, O Janārddana, say of this great feat of Arjuna while speaking of it in the midst of assemblies! What also will the diadem-decked Arjuna himself say of it?[20]—Censuring thee in this way, that foremost of ladies hath stopped at last! The co-wives of that lady are piteously lamenting with her as if she were their daughter-in-law![21]

"'There the mighty Cakuni, the chief of the Gāndhāras, of prowess incapable of being baffled, hath been slain by Sahadeva, the maternal uncle by the sister's son![22] Formerly, he used to be fanned with a couple of gold-handed fans! Alas, now, his prostrate form is being fanned by birds with their swings![23] He used to assume hundreds and thousands of forms. All the illusions, however, of that individual possessed of great deceptive powers, have been burnt by the energy of the son of Pāndu![24] An expert in guile, he had vanquished Yudhishthira in the assembly by his powers of deception and won from him his vast kingdom! The son of Pāndu, however, hath now won Cakuni's life-breaths![25] Behold, O Krishna, a large number of birds is now sitting around Cakuni! An expert in dice, alas, he had acquired that skill for the destruction of my sons![26] This fire of hostility with the Pāndavas had been ignited by Cakuni, for the destruction of my children as also of himself and his followers and kinsmen![27] Like those acquired by my sons, O puissant one, by the use of weapons, this one too, however wicked-souled, has acquired many regions of bliss by the use of weapons![28] My fear, O slayer of Madhu, is that that crooked person may not succeed in fomenting dissensions even there between my children all of whom are confiding and possessed of candour!'"[29]

SECTION XXV.

"Gāndhāri said,—'Behold that irresistible ruler of the Kāmvojas, that bull-necked hero, lying amid the dust, O Mādhava, though deserving of being stretched at his ease on Kāmvoja blankets![1] Stricken with great grief, his wife is weeping bitterly at sight of his blood-stained arms, which, however, formerly used to be smeared with sandal-paste![2] Indeed, the beauteous one exclaims,—Even now adorned with beautiful palms and graceful fingers, these two arms of thine resemble a couple of spiked maces, getting within whose clasp joy never left me for a moment![3] What will be my end, O ruler of men, when I am deprived of thee!—Endued with a melodious voice, the Kāmvoja queen is weeping helplessly and quivering with emotion![4] Behold that bevy of fair ladies there! Although tired with exertion and worn out with heat, yet beauty leaves not their forms like the sightliness of the wreaths worn by the celestials although exposed to the Sun![5] Behold, O slayer of Madhu, the heroic ruler of the Kalingas lying there on the ground, with his mighty arms adorned with a couple of *Angadas*![6] Behold, O Janārddana, those Māgadha ladies crying and standing around Jayatsena the ruler of the Magadhas![7] The charming and melodious wails of those long-eyed and sweet-voiced girls, O Krishna, are stupifying my heart exceedingly![8] With all their ornaments displaced, crying, and afflicted with grief, alas, those ladies of Magadha, worthy of resting on costly beds, are now lying down on the bare ground![9] There, again, those other ladies, surrounding their lord, the ruler of the Koçalas, viz., prince Vrihadvala, are indulging in loud wails![10] Engaged in plucking from his body the shafts with which it was pierced by Abhimanyu with the full might of his arms, those ladies are repeatedly losing their senses![11] The faces of those beautiful ladies, O Mādhava, through toil and the rays of the Sun, are looking like faded lotuses![12] There, the brave sons of Dhrishtadyumna, of tender years and all adorned with garlands of gold and beautiful *Angadas*, are lying, slain by Drona![13] Like insects on a blazing fire, they have all been burnt by falling upon Drona whose car was the chamber of fire, having the bow for its flames and shafts and darts and maces for its fuel![14] Similarly, the five Kekaya brothers, possessed of great courage, and adorned with beautiful *Angadas*, are lying on the ground, slain by Drona and with their faces turned towards that hero![15] Their coats of mail, of the splendour of heated gold, and their tall standards and cars and garlands all made of the same metal, are shedding a bright light on the Earth like so many blazing fires![16] Behold, O Mādhava, king Drupada overthrown in battle by Drona, like a mighty elephant in the forest slain by a huge lion![17] The bright umbrella, white in hue, of the king of the Pānchālas, shines, O lotus-eyed one, like the moon in the autumnal firmament![18] The daughters-in-law and the wives of the old king, afflicted with grief, having burnt his body on the funeral pyre, are proceeding, keeping the pyre to their right![19] There, those ladies, deprived of their senses, are removing the brave and great bowman, viz., Dhrishtaketu, that bull among the Chedis, slain by Drona![20] This crusher of foes, O slayer of Madhu, this great bowman having baffled many weapons of Drona, lieth there, deprived of life, like a tree uprooted by the wind![21] Alas, that brave ruler of the Chedis, that mighty car-warrior, viz., Dhrishtaketu, after having slain thousands of foes, lies, himself deprived of life![22] There, O Hrishikeça, the wives of the ruler of the Chedis are sitting around his body still decked with fair locks and beautiful ear-rings, though torn by carnivorous birds![23] Those foremost of ladies, placing upon their laps the prostrate form of the heroic Dhrishtaketu born of the Dāçārha race, are crying in sorrow![24] Behold, O Hrishikeça, the son, possessed of fair locks and excellent ear-rings, of that Dhrishtaketu, hacked in battle by Drona with his shafts![25] He never deserted his sire while the latter battled with his foes! Mark, O slayer of Madhu, he does not, even in death, desert that heroic parent![26] Even thus, my son's son, that slayer of hostile heroes, viz., the mighty-armed Lakshmana, hath followed his sire Duryodhana![27] Behold, O Keçava, the two brothers of Avanti, viz., Vinda and Anuvinda, lying there on the field, like two blossoming *Çāla* trees in the spring overthrown by the tempest![28] Clad in golden armour and adorned with *Angadas* of gold, they are still armed with swords and bows! Possessed of eyes like those of a bull, and decked with bright garlands, both of them are stretched on the field![29] The Pāndavas, O Krishna, with thyself, are surely unslayable, since they and thou have escaped from Drona and Bhishma, from Karna the son of Vikartana, from Kripa,[30] from Duryodhana, from the son of Drona, from the mighty car-warrior Jayadratha, from Somadatta, from Vikarna, and from the brave Kritavarman![31] Behold the reverses brought about by Time! Those bulls among men that were capable of slaying the very celestials by force of their weapons, have themselves been slain![32] Without doubt, O Mādhava, there is nothing difficult for destiny to bring about, since even these bulls among men, these heroes, have been slain by Kshatriya warriors![33] My sons endued with great activity were (regarded by me as) slain even then, O Krishna, when thou returnedst unsuccessfully to Upaplavya![34] Çāntanu's son and the wise Vidura told me then,—Cease to bear affection for thy children!—[35]The interviews of those persons could not go for nothing. Soon, O Janārddana, have my sons been consumed into ashes!' "[36]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"Having said these words, Gāndhāri, deprived of her senses by grief, fell down on the Earth! Casting off her fortitude, she suffered her senses to be stupified by grief![37] Filled with wrath and with sorrow at the death of her sons, Gāndhāri, with agitated heart, ascribed every fault to Keçava.[38]

"Gāndhāri said,—'The Pāndavas and the Dhārtarāshtras, O Krishna, have both been burnt! Whilst they were thus being exterminated, O Janārddana, why wert thou indifferent to them?[39] Thou wert competent to prevent the slaughter, for thou hast a large number of followers and a vast force! Thou hadst eloquence, and thou hadst the power (for bringing about peace)![40] Since deliberately, O slayer of Madhu, thou wert indifferent to this universal carnage, therefore, O mighty-armed one, thou shouldst reap the fruit of this act![41] By the little merit I have acquired through waiting dutifully on my husband, by that merit so difficult to attain, I shall curse thee, O wielder of the discus and the mace![42] Since thou wert indifferent to the Kurus and the Pāndavas whilst they slew each other, therefore O Govinda, thou shalt be the slayer of thy own kinsmen![43] On the thirtysixth year from this, O slayer of Madhu, thou shalt, after causing the slaughter of thy kinsmen and friends and sons, perish by disgustful means within the wilderness![44] The ladies of thy race, deprived of sons, kinsmen, and friends, shall weep and cry even as these ladies of the Bharata race!' "[45]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"Hearing these words, the high-souled Vāsudeva, addressing the venerable Gāndhāri, said unto her these words, with a faint smile,[46]—'There is none in the world, save myself, that is capable of exterminating the Vrishnis! I know this well! I am endeavouring to bring it about! In denouncing this curse, O thou of excellent vows, thou hast aided me in the accomplishment of that task![47] The Vrishnis are incapable of being slain by others, be they human beings or gods or *Dānavas!* The Yādavas, therefore, shall fall by one another's hand!'[48] After he of Daçārha's race had said these words, the Pāndavas became stupified. Filled with anxiety, all of them became hopeless of life!' "[49]

SECTION XXVI.

"The holy one said,—'Arise, arise, O Gāndhāri, do not set thy heart on grief! Through thy fault, this vast carnage has taken place![1] Thy son Duryodhana was wicked-souled, envious, and exceedingly arrogant. Applauding his wicked acts, thou regardest them to be good![2] Exceedingly cruel, he was the embodiment of hostilities, and disobedient to the injunctions of the old. Why dost thou wish to ascribe thy own faults to me?[3] Dead or lost, the person that grieves for what has already occurred, obtaineth more grief. By indulging in grief, one increases it twofold![4] A woman of the regenerate class bears children for the practice of austerities; the cow brings forth offspring for bearing burthens; the mare brings forth her young for acquiring speed of motion; the *Çudrā* woman bears a child for adding to the number of servitors; the *Vaiçayā* woman for adding to the number of keepers of cattle. A princess, however, like thee, brings forth sons for being slaughtered!' "[5]

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Hearing these words of Vāsudeva that were disagreeable to her, Gāndhāri, with heart exceedingly agitated by grief, remained silent.[6] The royal sage Dhritarāshtra, however, restraining the grief that arises from folly, enquired of Yudhishthira the just, saying,[7]—'If, O son of Pāndu, thou knowest it, tell me the number of those that have fallen in this battle, as also of those that have escaped with life!'[8]

"Yudhishthira answered,—'One billion six hundred and sixty millions and twenty thousand men have fallen in this battle.[9] Of the heroes that have escaped, the number is twenty-four thousand one hundred and sixty five.'[10]

Dhritarāshtra said,—'Tell me, O mighty-armed one, for thou art conversant with everything, to what ends have those foremost of men attained.'[11]

"Yudhishthira said,—'Those warriors of true prowess that have cheerfully cast off their bodies in fierce battle, have all attained to regions like those of Indra.[12] Knowing death to be inevitable, they that have encountered it cheerlessly, have attained to the companionship of the *Gandharvas*.[13] Those warriors that have fallen at the edge of weapons, while turning away from the field or begging for quarter, have attained to the world of the *Guhyakas*.[14] Those high-souled warriors who, observant of the duties of Kshatriyahood and regarding flight from battle to be shameful, have fallen, mangled with keen weapons, while advancing unarmed against fighting foes, have all assumed bright forms and attained to the regions of Brahman![15-16] The remaining warriors, that have anyhow met with death on the precincts of the field of battle, have attained to the region of the Uttara-Kurus.'[17]

Dhritarāshtra said,—'By the power of what knowledge, O son, thou seest these things like one crowned with ascetic success? Tell me this, O mighty-armed one, if thou thinkest that I can listen to it without impropriety!'[18]

"Yudhishthira said,—'While at thy command I wandered in the forest, I obtained this boon on the occasion of sojourning to the sacred places![19] I met with the celestial *Rishi* Lomaça and obtained from him the boon of spiritual vision. Thus on a former occasion I obtained second sight through the power of knowledge!'[20]

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'Is it necessary that our people should burn, with due rites, the bodies of both the friendless and the friended slain?[21] What shall we do with those that have none to look after them and that have no sacred fires? The duties that await us are many. Who are those whose (last) rites we should perform?[22] O Yudhishthira, will they obtain regions of blessedness by the merit of their acts, they whose bodies are now being torn and dragged by vultures and other birds?' "[23]

Vaiçampāyana continued,—"Thus addressed, Kunti's son Yudhishthira of great wisdom commanded Sudharman (the priest of the Kauravas) and Dhaumya, and Sanjaya of the *Suta* order,[24] and Vidura of great wisdom, and Yuyutsu of Kuru's race, and all his servants headed by Indrasena, and all the other *Sutas* that were with him,[25] saying,—'Cause the funeral rites of the slain, numbering by thousands, to be duly performed, so that no body may perish for want of persons to take care of them!'[26] At this command of king Yudhishthira the just, Vidura and Sanjaya and Sudharman and Dhaumya and Indrasena and others,[27] procuring sandal aloe and other kinds of wood used on such occasions, as also clarified butter and oil and perfumes and costly silken robes and other kinds of cloth,[28] and large heaps of dry wood, and broken cars and diverse kinds of weapons,[29] caused funeral pyres to be duly made and lighted and then without haste burnt, with due rites, the slain kings in proper order.[30] They properly burnt upon those fires that blazed forth with libations of clarified butter poured in torrents over them, the bodies of Duryodhana and his hundred brothers, of Calya, and Cala, and king Bhuriçravas;[31] of king Jayadratha and Abhimanyu, O Bhārata; of Dusçāsana's son and Lakshmana and king Dhrishtaketu; of Vrihanta and Somadatta and the hundreds of Srinjayas; of king Kshemadhanwan and Virāta and Drupada; of Cikhandin the prince of the Pānchālas, and Dhrishtadyumna of Prishata's race; of the valiant Yudhāmanyu and Uttamaujas; of the ruler of the Koçalas, the sons of Draupadi, and Cakuni the son of Suvala; of Achala and Vrishaka, and king Bhagadatta; of Karna and his son of great wrath; of those great bowmen, viz., the Kekaya princes, and those mighty car-warriors, viz., the Trigartas; of Ghatotkacha the prince of *Rākshasas*, and the brother of Vaka; of Alamvusha, that foremost of *Rākshasas*, and king Jalasandha; and of hundreds and thousands of other kings.[32-33] The *Pitri-medha* rites in honor of some of the illustrious dead were performed there, while some sang *Sāmans*, and some uttered lamentations for the dead.[39] With the loud noise of *Sāmans* and *Richs*, and the lamentations of the women, all creatures became stupified that night.[40] The funeral fires, smokeless and blazing brightly (amid the surrounding darkness), looked like luminous planets in the firmament enveloped by clouds.[41] Those among the dead that had come from diverse realms and were utterly friendless, were piled together in thousands of heaps and, at the command of Yudhishthira, were caused to be burnt by Vidura through a large number of persons acting coolly and influenced by goodwill and affection, on pyres made of dry wood.[42-43] Having caused their last rites to be performed, the Kuru king Yudhishthira, placing Dhritarāshtra at his head, proceeded towards the river Gangā."[44]

SECTION XXVII.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Arrived at the auspicious Gangā full of sacred water, containing many lakes, adorned with high banks and broad shores, and having a vast bed, they cast off their ornaments, upper garments, and belts and girdles. The Kuru ladies, crying and afflicted with great grief, offered oblations of water unto their sires and grandsons and brothers and kinsmen and sons and reverend seniors and husbands. Conversant with duties, they also performed the water-rite in honor of their friends.[1-3] While those wives of heroes were performing this rite in honor of their heroic lords, the access to the stream became easy, although the paths (made by the tread of many feet) disappeared afterwards.[4]* The shores of the stream, though crowded with those spouses of heroes, looked as broad as the ocean and presented a spectacle of sorrow and cheerlessness.[5] Then Kunti, O king, in a sudden paroxysm of grief, weepingly addressed her sons in these soft words:[6]—'That hero and great bowman, that leader of leaders of car-divisions, that warrior distinguished by every mark of heroism, who hath been slain by Arjuna in battle,[7] that warrior whom, ye sons of Pāndu, ye took for a *Suta's* child born of Rādhā, that hero who shone in the midst of his forces like the lord Surya himself,[8] who battled with all of you and your followers, who looked resplendent as he commanded the vast force of Duryodhana,[9] who had no equal on Earth for energy, that hero who preferred glory to life,[10] that unretiring warrior firm in truth and never fatigued with exertion, was your eldest brother! Offer oblations of water unto that eldest brother of yours who was born of me by the god of day! That hero was born with a pair of ear-rings and clad in armour, and resembled Surya himself in splendour!'[11-12] Hearing these painful words of their mother, the Pāndavas began to express their grief for Karna. Indeed, they became more afflicted than ever.[13] Then that tiger among men, viz., the heroic Yudhishthira, sighing like a snake, asked his mother,—'That Karna who was like an ocean having shafts for his billows, his tall standard for his vortex,[14] his own mighty arms for a couple of huge alligators, his large car for his deep lake, and the sound of his palms for his tempestous roar, and whose impetuousity none could withstand save Dhananjaya, O mother, wert thou the authoress of that hero's being? How was that son, resembling a very celestial, born of thee in former days?[15-16] The energy of his arms scorched all of us! How, O mother, couldst thou conceal him like a person concealing a fire within the folds of his cloth?[17] His might of arms was always worshipped by the Dhārtarāshtras even as we always worship the might of the wielder of *Gāndiva*![18] How was that foremost of mighty men, that first of car-warriors, who endured the united force of all lords of Earth in battle, how was he a son of thine?[19] Was that foremost of all wielders of weapons our eldest brother? How didst thou bring forth that child of wonderful prowess?[20] Alas, in consequence of the concealment of this affair by thee, we have been undone! By the death of Karna, ourselves with all our friends have been exceedingly afflicted![21] The grief I feel at Karna's death is a hundred times greater than that which was caused by the death of Abhimanyu and the sons of Draupadi, and the destruction of the Pānchālas and the Kurus! Thinking of Karna, I am burning with grief, like a person thrown into a blazing fire![22-23] Nothing could have been unattainable by us, not excepting things belonging to heaven! Alas, this terrible carnage, so destructive of the Kurus, would not have occurred!'[24] Copiously indulging in lamentations like these, king Yudhishthira the just uttered loud wails of woe. The puissant monarch then offered oblations of water unto his deceased elder brother.[25] Then all the ladies that crowded the shores of the river suddenly sent up a loud wail of grief.[26] The intelligent king of the Kurus, viz., Yudhishthira, caused the wives and members of Karna's family to be brought before him.[27] Of righteous soul, he performed, with them, the water-rite in honor of his eldest brother. Having finished the ceremony, the king, with his senses exceedingly agitated, rose from the waters of Gangā."[28]

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* So large was that concourse of human beings that in consequence of their tread, paths appeared where paths were none. The access to the stream was thus facilitated.—T.

FINIS STREE PARVA.

THE MAHABHARATA

OF

KRISHNA-DWAIPAYANA VYASA

TRANSLATED

INTO

ENGLISH PROSE.

* * *

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